

PEDAGOGICS OF THE TALMUD

AND THAT OF MODERN TIMES

A COMPARATIVE STUDY

BY

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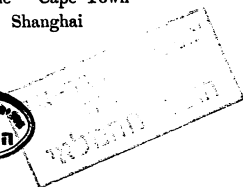
(GOLDSMID PROFESSOR OF HEBREW IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE)

HUMPHREY MILFORD

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

London Edinburgh Glasgow Copenhagen
New York Toronto Melbourne Cape Town
Bombay Calcutta Madras Shanghai

1924



אמר לו פרננו ילך בנך לאיסכולי

(Mid. Rab. Shir Hashirim, II. 5.)

א"ר יוחנן אלו תלמידי חכמים שעוסקים בבנינו של עולט

'Scholars are the architects of the world.'

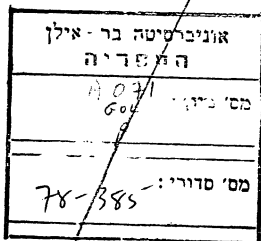
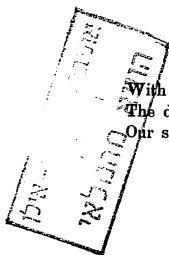
(Sab. 114 a.)

'The heart ran o'er

With silent worship of the great of old!

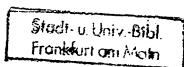
The dead but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule

Our spirits from their urns.'



א"ר יוחנן

Printed in England



FOREWORD

IN the main, the accompanying Essay was written some years ago, but was never published or printed.

I now send it forth, having somewhat recast the original, and added some items of interest, which will tend to bring into bolder relief the theme which I have chosen.

The form of presentation adopted by me—that of indenting the bulk of the statements and sayings in the text—will, it seems to me, give a clearer and more rapid *coup d'œil* of the subject considered in this comparative study. I have in this way attempted to avoid that jumble of statements which beclouds the issue in the one or two treatises which have incidentally but dimly hinted at the comparison which I have instituted herein.

I would but add that the citations throughout, whether from Jewish or non-Jewish sources, are made at first-hand, from the original.

Moreover, in the desire not to over-weight this Essay with too much detail or with too many quotations, I have given more consideration to the aspect of elementary education than to education in general; and in the sayings selected to illustrate my contentions, I have betimes not drawn too nice a distinction between the school *child* and the student of larger growth.

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

WHEN, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Prussian king, defeated near Jena, exclaimed, 'The State must regain by intellectual forces what it has lost in *physical* power', was not this utterance the distant echo of the very pronouncement that materialised nearly 1,800 years before, in the course pursued by the great teachers in Israel about the time of the destruction of the Second Temple at Jerusalem?

They, too, felt that the Jewish people, if it would continue to live, must regain by intellectual forces what it had lost in *political* power. They, therefore, set about to strengthen the educational agencies that had already existed among the people, increasing facilities for learning in schools, warning that generation against apathy in supporting their national schools, and adding that if towns were wiped out of the map of Palestine, it would be in consequence of the meagre support accorded to the teachers and schools throughout the country.

In point of fact, after the destruction of the Temple, a vast intellectual movement was at work in the land of Palestine to multiply schools for the young, and this it was which undoubtedly exercised

a decided influence upon the future destinies of the whole people.

These institutions, furthermore, had taken such deep root in the social system of the people, that, when their national independence in Palestine had gone, they transplanted these national institutions to the lands of their captivity, as a treasure that was never to be alienated from their midst, as a source of comfort and joy, as the best exponent of their hopes amid their dispersion, their distresses and temptations. Herein, in the education of the rising generation, lay the hope of their very existence as a people.

But it is scarcely necessary to marvel at this phenomenon. Learning had been the mission of the Jew from the early days of his history ; it was his nature ; he had been nurtured in it. Under the shade of intellectual progress, the physical emancipation of the Israelitish people, commemorated by the Passover, was to reach its climax. Education, the study and practice of the Law, in its widest sense, was to be the direct object of Israel's deliverance from the servitude of Egypt.

And this force it was which, in every succeeding generation, helped to defend and protect the Israelite, even to preserve him, though physically bound by the shackles which bigotry, intolerance, and hate tightened around him. The education of the individual and the instruction of the child formed, throughout the entire course of Jewish history, the only cure for the ills and horrors which

seem to be the destiny of the Jewish people, even unto this day.

Our theme, however, in this Essay is not education in general; our purpose is to deal with one aspect of it, namely, while tracing elements of pedagogic methods in the Talmud, to indicate in outline how, within limits, we might formulate a comparative study between the pedagogics of the Talmud and that of modern times. It can be shown how nearly all the modern theories on the subject of education are reflected in the pages of the Talmud and subsequent Hebrew literature; how the pedagogic principles of a Comenius (†1671) and a Pestalozzi (†1827) are there anticipated by more than a thousand years; and how, in spite of the lapse of time, the statements of many Rabbis on this head as set forth in the Talmud, are almost identical with those put forth with an air of novelty in comparatively recent times by recognised authorities on the science of education.

Indeed, comparing the rules of pedagogy of modern times with those scattered throughout Talmudic and Rabbinic writings, we have to come to the conclusion that even in the department of learning the truth holds, that that which is has already been ages ago; 'there is nothing new under the sun'.

Modern pedagogy is only a few hundred years old, whereas the Talmud is about 1,400 years old; Rabbi Akiba, the martyr-teacher, died about 1,800 years ago; and the 'Ethics of the Fathers' (Pirké

Aboth), containing some of the earliest aphorisms on pedagogy, date back over 1,700 years.

We shall endeavour to show that we can place a Hillel, a Rab, a Samuel ben Silat side by side with a Pestalozzi, a Herbart and his disciples, with this difference, however, that the pedagogues of the Talmud, if we may use the term, had no source of information from which to draw their deductions other than direct observation, that they made their inferences by penetrating into the depths of human nature, as each occasion presented itself. They had no earlier philosophic system upon which their theories might repose; they dealt simply with life's fresh evidences; in other words, with living examples.

The teachings of Rabbi Akiba, R. Ammi, and R. Assi on education are practically the same as e.g. those proclaimed as a new discovery by men like Ratichius, Basedow, Diesterweg, and their co-workers.

Not that we are able in the following pages to set up a complete and definite system of pedagogy; but we need scarcely adduce any stronger support for our contention beyond furnishing the mere statement of the views expressed by the authors in their sayings on the subject of education, and such definite statement often serves as the best form of evidence.

I could scarcely have expected so strong a support for my contention regarding the value and right appreciation of the earliest contributions to

the science of education, as that which I find in the following frank admission by Palmer, the evangelical Professor of Theology in Tübingen, and writer on pedagogy, in the early part of the last century : 'The want of the true historic sense is one of the chief causes why our Pedagogues are so easily captivated by every new phase and catchword ; and this absence of historic feeling argues at the same time a want of piety, and is an evidence of boastful and presumptuous self-conceit.'

The following, in their original, are among the Jewish and non-Jewish sources which I have had before me in the preparation of this study :

The Talmud ; the Midrashim ; Maimonides (*Hilchoth Talmud Torah*) ; the Shulchan Aruch (*Yoré Deah* and *Eben Haezer* specially) ; Jost's and Graetz's *History of the Jews* ; Hamburger's *Real-Encyclopädie* ; works bearing upon one or other aspect of the subject by Marcus, Güdemann, and Strassburger ; Niemeyer, Schumann, Schmidt, Diesterweg, Palmer, and others. I leave out of consideration those treatises which are mere adaptations or translations, and which contain no reference to the original author.

A.

BRIEF SURVEY OF EDUCATION AMONG THE ISRAELITES IN EARLY HISTORY AND TALMUDIC TIMES

THE necessity for instructing the youth of the nation in all that appertains to the knowledge of the Divine Word, is repeatedly referred to in the Pentateuch and in the Bible generally. This duty is mostly enjoined as a religious task upon the parents or those nearest to them in relationship.

There is, however, no reference to any systematic mode of public elementary instruction; and although modern Biblical commentators would argue from such books as Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus, and from the activities of Ezra, in favour of the existence of Schools in Bible times, in our opinion these do not evidence, however much they may have foreshadowed, the existence of the popular school such as we understand the term. 'Schools' in the sense in which the expression is now employed, did not exist among the teachers in Bible times. The father was responsible for the education of his child, and it remained his solemn duty till the days of Simon ben Shatach.

'And thou shalt teach them unto thy children, and speak of them' (Deut. vi. 7).

'And thou shalt tell thy son' (Exod. xiii. 8).

'Hear, my son, the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the teaching of thy mother' (Prov. i. 8).

Such was the highest, the guiding principle of instruction in Bible times. Nor did the parent regard it as an irksome task ; for he knew full well that, in the work of instructing his children in the knowledge and tenets of his religion, he was laying up for himself a merit equal to one who had personally received the Holy Torah at Sinai (Berach. 21 b).

He realised moreover that

‘He who instructed his son in the knowledge of the Torah, enjoyed the fruit thereof in this world, and the stock remained unto him in the world yonder’ (Sabb. 127 a) ;

whilst

‘He who left behind him a son who engaged in the study of God’s Law was as though he had never died’ (Midr. Rab. I. 49).

On this account no trouble was too great for a father to carry into effect this ‘heavenly work’, as ‘education’ is repeatedly called in the Talmud (Erub. 13 a).

One’s grandchildren had to receive the same attention as one’s children in the matter of education, as, in the eye of the Law, they were regarded on the same footing as the children themselves.

‘And thou shalt make (the words) known unto thy children and unto thy children’s children’ (Deut. iv. 9).

The children of others, especially orphans, frequently shared in the instruction given to one’s own children, and in this sense they were looked upon as that man’s children.

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Every teacher was, therefore, in relation to his pupil a 'father', and the pupil became his 'son'.

When in Scripture (Deut. vi. 7) it stated, 'and thou shalt teach (these words) diligently unto thy children', the expression 'thy children' included 'thy pupils', since it is said: 'Ye are children unto the Lord thy God' (Siphre on Deut. § 34).

And in like manner the words of Numbers iii. 1 sqq.:

'These are the generations of Moses and Aaron' imply that 'He who instructs his neighbour's child is as though he had given him birth' (Sanh. 19 b; 99 b); for it is only the sons of Aaron and not of Moses that are mentioned in this passage,—hence the conclusion that Aaron's children, having been taught by Moses, were regarded as his foster-children, and included in 'the generations of Moses'.

The prophet Elisha called after Elijah when departing from him: 'My father, my father!'

'As for him who teaches the Law to the son of an ignoramus, he has the power to turn the Divine decree and annul it' (Bab. Mez. 85 a).

'He who instructs the son of his fellow-man will be accounted worthy of occupying a seat in Heaven' (ibid.).

'He who rears an orphan child in his house is as though he had begotten him' (Meg. 13 a; Sanh. 19 b).

The efforts of the Levites and the Prophets to diffuse the knowledge of God's Law were directed to the adults, but not to the children of the community. It was these elder disciples whom they inspired with their example and knowledge, and laid the foundation of that true strength of Israel

which evidenced itself not only on the field of battle when the occasion demanded such valour, but also in those works to which the times of peace were favourable.

That 'knowledge is power' has been proved through the centuries over and over again by the small nation of Israel. To the far-seeing Rabbi from the days of Rabbi Simon ben Yochai (2nd cent. c.e.) downwards, the school of the Jew was, indeed, the outward symbol of that power, the spinal cord of the Jewish people, the axis round which the very existence of the people revolved; for the Rabbis held:

'There is no one so poor as the man who is wanting in knowledge' (Ned. 41 a).

'A Sage met a friend who, with a cloth bound carelessly round his head, was hurrying off his child to school. "Wherefore such haste? Why leave the house in such attire?"

"Because," his friend replied, "every other consideration must give way to that of getting children to school?"

'From that day onward the Sage himself would partake of no food until he had taken his son to school' (Kid. 30 a).

In order to obtain the wherewithal to gain knowledge, no sacrifice was too great for a Jew; he would part with his costliest treasure, he would even dispose of his Scroll of the Law (Meg. 27 a). He scorned to be nicknamed an Am-haarets (ignoramus), as he would have been, had he not done his utmost to give his child a thorough grounding in general and religious knowledge (ibid.).

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The early Sages attributed the downfall of the Jewish State, the loss of its independence and its political existence, to the ignorance prevailing at the time, and to the absence of the proper training as far as concerned the youth of those days. On the other hand, they declared that the uplifting of down-trodden Israel, his spiritual redemption, his missionary effort to proclaim belief in the one God far and wide throughout the world: this revival was due to the children who frequented the schools. It was they who brought about this marvellous change. And so long as the lips of innocent children will continue to repeat the sacred words of the Holy Law in the Schools, so long will the people of Israel survive, they will not succumb.

‘Would you destroy the Jews’, is the reply of the wise Oenomaus of Gadara to Israel’s foes, ‘You must first destroy their synagogues and schools; for while the voices of their children continue to chirp in the schools, and they are taught the word of God, all the world will not prevail against them.’ (Cf. Midr. R. I. 65, 20.)—^{1a}

It was reserved for the renewed Jewish Kingdom in Palestine to establish schools for children. The voice of the prophet was hushed, but his place was taken by the ‘teacher’; these were inflamed with a passion for instructing, for expounding, and for disseminating the learning of the times, so as to make it the common heritage of the people. The task which they imposed upon themselves was no light one. Factions had arisen which, knowingly or unknowingly, tended to shake the foundation of Jewish

doctrine. In these circumstances, the attention of the regenerators had before all things to be turned to the youth of the nation, to those who might become the bearers of a better future.

Then it was that, for the first time, the clause which insisted upon general compulsory schooling for children was proclaimed in these words:—

שִׁהְיוּ הַתִּינוּקוֹת הוֹלְכִין לְבֵית הַסֵּפֶר

‘That the children of the community should receive instruction in common in institutions specially appointed for the purpose (T. Jerus. Ket. VIII. end).’

Their establishment was due to the initiative of Rabbi Simon ben Shatach, Head of the Synhedrion, who had observed how imperfectly the system had worked in which the parent was the sole instructor of his child, and in which fatherless children were necessarily debarred from all means of education whatsoever.

Simon ben Shatach, who stood at the head of the Synhedrion in the stormy times of Alexander Jannaeus (c. 103–76 B.C.E.), was a man full of determination and energy, undaunted and incorruptible, and he took upon himself this task of restoring, by means of public teaching, the knowledge of God’s Law which had been waning. Nay more, as it had been looked upon askance by those in authority, he may have had a further reason for determining that the instruction of the children should no longer be left in the hands of the parents, as had been the case hitherto, but that these should be bound to

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send their children to school. It has been thought that thus, by one and the same stroke, he prevented the religious instruction of the child from falling into the hands of the Sadducees.

The true founder, however, of the Jewish Elementary School seems to have been Joshua ben Gamla (63-65 c. E.), who had schools established in every town inhabited by Jews. The passage of the Talmud in the treatise *Baba Bathra* (21 a) which records this important departure in the history of education among the Jews, is as follows :

‘ May Joshua ben Gamla be remembered for a blessing. Had it not been for him, the Holy Law must needs have died out in Israel. Originally the father was wont to instruct his child ; but, in consequence of this system, the fatherless received no tuition whatever. It was thereupon ordained that elementary teachers be appointed in Jerusalem. But even this plan could not work ; for only those who were in a position to travel to the Holy City received instruction, while the poor, and those who were unable to get to Jerusalem, were left wholly unprovided for as regards mental culture. The next step was to appoint teachers for every district. But this did not suffice, whereupon Joshua ben Gamla provided that schools be erected in every town throughout Israel.’

[I would state *en passant* that the suggestion has been made that Joshua ben Perachyah should be read for J. b. Gamla.]

The following words of Josephus (C. Ap. ii. 26) on this head are instructive :

‘ The Law commands us to bring up those children in learning, and to exercise them in the laws, and

make them acquainted with the acts of their predecessors, in order to their imitation of them, and that they may be nourished up in the laws from their infancy, and might neither transgress them, nor yet have any pretence for their ignorance of them.'

We find the following among some of the statements in the Talmud ; and although we may not be inclined to take the figures literally, and to regard them as serious and accurate from a statistical point of view, they may yet be considered as a fanciful description of the enthusiasm with which the idea of school education was taken up, and carried out in practice, in the days about the time of the destruction of the Second Temple.

'One might search from Dan to Beersheba, and not meet with an ignorant person, nor find a man or woman, a male or female child, who was unacquainted with the ritual laws of the clean and unclean' (Sanh. 94 b).

'In Jerusalem there were 394 Courts of Justice, as many Synagogues, as many Houses of Learning, and as many Elementary Schools' (Ket. 105 a).

'There were 400 Synagogues at Bethar, in each 400 teachers, and 400 children to each teacher' (Git. 58 a).

'R. Simon ben Gamaliel would say that there were 1,000 school-children in the house of my father, 500 of whom received instruction in the Torah and 500 in Greek' (Bab. Kam. 83 a).

The system of general education in schools seems, however, not to have taken deep root. Hence Yehuda II (c. 232 c.e.), once in the position held by

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his grandfather Yehuda I, grappled with the problem most energetically, and dealt with the educational question in a drastic manner. He suffered no interruption in the child's instruction, not even if the rebuilding of the Temple demanded it; for he it was who attributed the cause of its destruction to the loose and imperfect system of teaching which had existed among the people. (Cf. the various utterances in Sab. 119 b.)

He it was, too, who was responsible for the severe treatment meted out to those congregations that failed in respect of providing adequate and proper means of instructing the children of their schools. This method of his was, in reality, but the result of his general principle of freedom in social conditions.

Education was to be no monopoly. R. Yehuda desired an extension of the benefits of education. He would see more equality among his brethren, and learning more of a heritage common to them all. He regarded ignorance as the root-cause of many of the social evils among men, and of the individual himself. He looked upon it, therefore, as his bounden duty to establish schools in the midst of the people.

‘A community that neglects to establish schools for children is bound to perish (lit. ‘should be destroyed’); its well-being, its moral and social life, must needs be endangered, and it falls a prey to the enemy, when men of constant faith cease to exist therein’ (Cf. Sab. 119 b).

This energy in adopting measures for establishing schools for the education of the young spread equally

to Babylon, where Abaia and others worked for the cause. In very deed it had become a fixed rule 'that a Jew dare not reside in a place in which there was no proper provision for the education of the young'.

We must not omit to pay a tribute to the merits of Rabbi Chiya, one of the greatest names connected with the progress of educational work during the second century.

This R. Chiya it was, whose profound knowledge of anatomy and medicine rendered him one of the most courted physicians of the time.

He erected schools for the study of the Bible (Ket. 103 b), remarking: 'I am labouring to prevent the study of the Bible from being forgotten. My plan is as follows: I take flax and weave nets, and catch stags, the flesh of which I present to poor orphans, and out of the skin of which I prepare parchment. I then travel to such towns as possess no teachers for children. I write for five children the Five Books of Moses; I then teach six children the Six "Orders" of the Mishna, and bid each child teach the same to its school companion.'

These measures affecting instruction for the children of the people were of far-reaching consequence, and they succeeded ultimately. Schools sprang up everywhere, and parents were only too glad to avail themselves of the boon, and to see to it that their children attended them.

And so down the centuries through the vista of history, once started and placed on a firm footing,

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the Jewish school flourished throughout various lands and during successive generations ; and after Palestine and Babylon, Jewish learning found a home now in Arabia and Egypt, now in Spain and France, now in Germany and Eastern Europe ; and signs are not wanting to-day that it will be said of the English Jews of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that they had proved themselves worthy of the traditions of their ancestors in their enthusiasm for Jewish learning, and in their endeavours to support and strengthen and render efficient the educational institutions in their midst.

In very deed, by so doing they were but continuing the traditions of Hebrew scholarship in England that had been interrupted by Edward I's edict of expulsion in 1290, before which time a lively literary intercourse had been kept up between the learned among English Jews and those of northern France, which served to keep alive and foster something analogous, and by no means inferior to the 'Apostolic Succession' of the Church, namely 'Rabbinic Succession', or rather the 'Succession of Rabbinic tradition', the pursuit of which helped to unite the life and works of mediaeval and modern times with the bygone days of the era of the Talmud.

B.

VIEWS ON EDUCATION BY TYPICAL MODERN THINKERS

It has been said that 'the ideal education of the Middle Ages was rather that of a training which should develop the best powers and faculties of the individual, than of discipline consciously directed towards material ends, and towards industrial or professional success'.

If this was true of the education of the Middle Ages, how much truer was it of the teachings of the Rabbis, who lived and taught during the early centuries of the Talmud.

To aid us in estimating for comparative purposes this remarkable contribution made all unconsciously to the Science of Education by the Rabbis of old, it may be as well to start with a brief statement of some of the cardinal principles of pedagogy, put forth by *typical representatives of educational science in modern times*, although this can by no means be regarded as an exhaustive list of the great minds who have taught and written upon this all-engrossing subject.

'Each of these names represents some one phase of thought, or some form of fruitful experiment, in regard to the art or science of education.'

We might begin as far back as the period of the Reformation with its outstanding personality :

MARTIN LUTHER (b. 1483).

As was natural, he held that children have to be instructed in the fear of God ; if in the home there be no obedience, how could we expect good government in the town, the country, the principality or kingdom ? The root has to be good, if good fruit is to follow.

Furthermore, the right way to *train children* is by *kindness*. What is effected by compulsion, by means of the rod and stripes, is not of great value ; for right conduct will seldom ensue and be lasting, when once the rod is no longer applied. Therefore, he says, see to it that children be taught first about spiritual things, and thereafter about worldly matters.

The disciples of the school are the seed and source of the Church, and God preserves the Church by means of the Schools.

Next to *Religious Instruction*, Luther holds *Music* in high esteem, regarding it as the most beautiful of God's gifts—to which Satan is an avowed enemy ; inasmuch as it is a form of discipline, somewhat of a task-master, softening, subduing men, and rendering them gentler and more reasonable ; it chases away anger, and dispels all kinds of evil thoughts and vicious habits. See how it acted in the case of King Saul's evil spirit !

The influence of music on the rendering of the text is very marked ; it *adds liveliness to the reading*.

WOLFGANG RATKE (RATICHIUS), b. 1571.

The principles of Ratke's method are contained in his treatise of 1617, which seems to be a work prepared conjointly with friends. After an introduction, he refers in three divisions to the duties of the teacher and the scholar, and to the methods of instruction.

The following is a summary of his chief rules, elaborated by his adherents :

- (1) Begin with prayer.
- (2) Teach in accordance with the order and course of nature.
- (3) One thing at a time.
- (4) Frequent repetition of each point, so that the teacher be sure that it has been grasped by the pupil.
- (5) All should first be taught in the mother-tongue, and thereafter in other languages.
- (6) Everything should proceed *without compulsion* (the young not to be beaten, the teacher not to be irritated, but to have the respect and love of his pupils) ; nothing to be learnt by heart ; daily hours of relaxation, and avoidance of two hours consecutive teaching.

JOHANN AMOS COMENIUS (KOMENSKY), b. 1592.

The *Didactica Magna*, the Great Instructor, the most important work of Comenius, the author himself describes as 'the universal art of instructing

all men in all things in a safe, rapid, delightful and concise manner'.

We can do the State no greater service than to teach its youth ; and there is no more effective way for the betterment of the world, and for checking men's errors, than the right sort of culture as applied to the child.

Children at an early age are more responsive to God's medicine, they are more easily taught, since they have as yet not been attacked by evil ways. All should help in this work of child culture. If we desire well-established and successful Churches, States, and households, we have before all things to see to it that we have well-ordered and flourishing schools, and that these become the true and living workshops of men.

Man is the last and *most perfect of God's creations*, into which he breathed His Spirit. Each one of us has a triple abode, the mother's womb, this earth, and Heaven beyond, the first and second being compared to a plantation, a refectory, a school, from which we are transplanted to the *Heavenly Academy*, which is *everlasting*. Happy he who brings a well-developed frame with him as he enters the world ; a thousand times happier he who takes with him hence a soul well cultivated !

It was not a bad definition of man, he says, which was once given, namely, that man is a creature capable of being taught. He can only become *man* when he is instructed. Without education, he is the *beast*.

Education is, naturally, *the parents' concern* ; but as parents are few and far between who are able to devote themselves to teaching their children, it was ordained that the children of the masses be entrusted to special persons,—teachers, for instruction in common.

In every place there should be a school ; for the general youth of both sexes, the rich and the poor, require it, so as to be able to spend this life profitably, and to learn how to prepare worthily for the next world.

School education has *to be general* in its scope. Living in the world, one should know something of most things, so as to be able to form fairly correct judgments in the course of one's experience.

Culture, virtue and piety are the three sources from which flow all the streams of the most perfect joy.

The following are a few of his rules :

All children but those deprived of their faculties have to be taught. This has to be done without compulsion, rigour or corporal punishment ; wherever possible in an *easy, pleasant, and voluntary manner*.

The basis of all improvement by means of education is to be found in a careful arrangement in teaching in which *Nature* is *our Instructress*, as regards the proper time, the method, and the subject-matter ; the gradual acquisition of knowledge proceeding without lacunae or leaps, and not desisting till completed in the way that Nature works.

JOHN LOCKE (b. 1632).

In *Thoughts concerning Education*, Locke emphasises in his opening words, that the highest aim of education is to bring about the condition of 'a sound mind in a sound body'; adding that 'he that has these two, has little more to wish for; and he that is wanting in either of them, would be but little the better for anything else'.

Man should consent to nothing but what is suitable to the dignity of a *rational creature*.

Great care should be taken in the forming of children's minds, and giving them that seasoning early which shall influence their lives in the future, so that the man be able to deny himself his own desires, and purely follow what reason directs as best, though the appetite lean the other way.

Speaking of *the discipline of punishments*, Locke remarks, that 'great severity of punishment does but very little good, nay great harm, in education; it will be found that *caeteris paribus* those children who have been most chastised, seldom make the best men'.

The usual lazy and short way, by *chastisement and the rod*, is the most unfit of any to be used. The sort of correction, in which the shame of suffering for having done amiss does not work more upon the child than the pain, naturally breeds an aversion against that which it is the tutor's purpose to create a liking for. Children come to hate things, when they find themselves whipped and chid and teased about them.

A slavish discipline makes a slavish temper. Whilst the fear of the rod hangs over it, the child dissembles obedience, but gives the greater scope to his inclination, as soon as that fear is removed.

In place of rewards and punishments, esteem and disgrace should be the most powerful incentive to the mind.

Locke would have parents impose as *few rules as possible* upon their children; but they should see that they be well observed, when once made.

He dwells upon the advantages of a *home-education*, the society of parents to be encouraged to the utmost, that of servants to be avoided.

Temperaments are as varied as features. The child's disposition must be early and secretly studied, and the treatment regulated accordingly.

Induce early habits of prayer, truthfulness, and kindness.

JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU (b. 1712).

In his *Emil* or *Concerning Education*, he demands that 'the child be educated *according to Nature*', beginning with the statement that 'all is good as it proceeds from the hand of its Author; all goes wrong at the hand of man'.

Man will not leave things as Nature has fashioned them, aye, he will not leave untouched even man himself. Plants grow up by being tended, and man by means of education; the latter is gained partly from Nature, from men, and from things.

Man's true study is the knowledge of his destiny.

He who knows how to bear the good and the ills of this life is, according to Rousseau's idea, the best educated one. Hence it follows that *true education* consists less in precept than *in practice*.

We begin to teach ourselves as soon as we begin to live ; that is, our education begins at birth, and our first teacher is the one who brought us into being. 'No mother, no child!' The duties are mutual, the child must love its mother before it recognises it to be a duty. If the voice of blood-relationship is not strengthened by intercourse and nurture, it becomes dumb in the earliest years, and the heart dies off almost before it is born. Thus at the very first steps we distance ourselves from Nature. Nature desires that children remain children before they become men.

A pupil has to be treated according to his age. The special *characteristics* of children *must be known*, in order to understand what rules and regulations are appropriate for the intellectual and moral development of the child.

Furthermore, the *educator* must himself be a man, in order to be an example.

When correcting, never let the child feel that it is being corrected, but that the correction follows as a natural consequence of wrong action.

J. B. BASEDOW (b. 1723).

His prime rules in the education of the child were these: *Not much in quantity*, but in a pleasant and delightful manner. *Not much*, but in an elementary

order, proceeding gradually from the easy to the more difficult, and without leaving any lacunae in the subject-matter taught.

Not quantity but much useful knowledge, such as cannot be omitted, or forgotten, without harm to the individual.

Religious Instruction must be, first, methodical and elementary ; and, secondly, in conveying it, no words or phrases should be employed in consequence of which children might imbibe erroneous ideas on the subject.

We might regard as a trilogy the three names, which stand forth in the department of elementary education with conspicuous importance, viz.:-

Pestalozzi (1746-1827).

Herbart (1776-1841).

Fröbel (1782-1851).

PESTALOZZI asks : ' What determines the nature of man ? ' ' What are its distinctive signs as such ? ' And he replies :—Not flesh and blood, not animal sensations or human desires, but the capacities and faculties of the human heart, of man's spirit, and his artistic powers. His animal feelings have to be subordinated to the Divine power.

The *child of the poor* as of the king may be equally introduced to the first steps of *elementary knowledge*, and all children are to become as kind, as sensible, and as practical as possible.

And he held further, that it was in the living room that the dawn of development,—its earliest

processes,—may be discerned, that ‘the *home* was the basis of the education of humanity’. He likens the process of the mind’s development to that of a plant, and is fond of looking at it in ‘Nature’s way’, from the point of view of a growth, gradual and almost imperceptible. We see not the process; but the biggest tree springs from a tiny seed.

Nature is a better teacher than men, he says; so endeavour to follow Nature, and add to the little store of learning once acquired the grains of further knowledge, by a slow and sure and gradual method.

FRÖBEL has revealed his whole soul, his sympathetic interest in the true cultivation of the young child’s mind, in the following striking utterance:

‘In the Kindergarten one can, as it were, actually feel the beat of *the angels’* wings, whom our Father sends down to protect and *shield his children.*’

His idea was to develop thoroughly, and to bring into play at an early age, all those faculties of the child which are vitally necessary for its deriving the utmost benefit from school instruction.

But, in the words of Schumann, the greatest influence on the pedagogy of modern times was gained by one who has been styled its ‘apostle’, namely,

HERBART. His aphorisms on pedagogy are particularly stimulating. He seeks to introduce the psychological aspect into pedagogy, and to see how far the latter has its foundation and purpose in ethics.

Instruction is the first seed in training; but the educative process has, at its end, not learning alone

or outward technical knowledge, but above all what is *real education*, namely, *the perfecting of the individual life*. He anticipated Herbert Spencer's definition of education, the object of which was 'to prepare us for complete living'. Though the kernel of Herbart's teaching was 'interest', it really aimed at man's highest interests.

The teacher has to train and cultivate, according to plan, those elements of soul-life brought under his notice, until the many-sided interest be awakened in the child taught, from which are to be developed in due course, on the one hand, the right will and the right taste, and on the other hand, the morally aesthetic judgment.

Herbart demands for instruction *Attention*, *Concentration*, and lastly *method*, i. e. a well-ordered and independent activity on the part of the pupil who knows his subject, working under the direction of his teacher. He, therefore, has in view three cardinal processes in education: the merely presentative, the analytic and the synthetic.

DIESTERWEG (1790-1866).

His first pedagogic work appeared in 1820, 'On Education in general and on School-instruction in particular'. In it he characterises instruction as the chief means of education; next comes the concrete example itself; and then discipline, without which no state, no community, no home, nor school can thrive.

Higher than good doctrine stands good *discipline*.

The School is the intermediary between family life and communal life; and the teacher himself is not a slave to the public whim, but he stands in the service of a higher Master.

He holds that the eternal purpose of pedagogic teaching of all time remains one and the same,—*humanity*.

In his *Wegweiser für Deutsche Lehrer* (1832–1834), he says:

As no one can give to another that which he does not himself possess, so no one can develop, train and mould others, who is not himself developed, trained and cultivated: that he can do so only in that degree to which he himself has attained; and that he is qualified to train others only so long as he continues to cultivate his own gifts by progressive training.

He gives the following advice for self-culture:

Get the best works of authors on the subject you would study; in the same hour *keep to but one subject*; *repeat* important parts frequently; obtain one or two bright and clever associates with whom to read and discuss subjects.

His rules for the instruction of pupils are these:

- (1) Teach according to *the natural method*;
- (2) Begin from the pupil's standpoint, and preserve continuity in teaching.
- (3) Have *object-lessons*.
- (4) Proceed from the near to the distant, from the simple to the complex, from the easy to the more difficult, from the known to the unknown.

- (5) Teach in an elementary way, not scientifically, i.e. begin with the simple and concrete, and pass on to the general.
- (6) *Continue the exercise till the pupil knows it fluently.*
- (7) *Study the individuality of the pupil.*

As regards the teacher's method of instruction, it has to be *interesting*, vigorous and continuous.

James Sully in his *Teacher's Handbook of Psychology* (1886) in Chapters IX and X has some interesting observations on 'Mental Reproduction : Memory', and on pp. 203-205 touches upon the 'Art of Mnemonics', remarking that in ancient times great importance was attached to certain devices for aiding memory and shortening its work, which devices have been known as Artificial Memory, *Memoria Technica*, and the art of Mnemonics. . . . And in modern times attempts have been made to shorten the process of learning dates, &c., by Mnemonic word-forms and lines.

Bearing in mind these views on the science of education, held in modern times by some of the foremost practical thinkers on the subject since the Renaissance,—views which in the main are in agreement with one another, it will help us to prize at their true value the utterances of our Rabbis of old relating to this self-same problem, when we come to consider the details of the subject as set forth in the course of this Essay.

I. A

THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

It was the Jewish code, if any, that regarded the child as father of the man. No wonder, then, that the greatest precautions were applied in the rearing of the child from the hour of its birth onwards. Its physical condition was a matter of vital importance, since, like its parent, it was born in the image of its Maker, after His likeness, so that in time it might become one of the members of the Kingdom of God upon earth.

It goes without saying, that the love of a Jewish parent for his child was always of the very highest. In fact, so axiomatic a truth required no special mention in the pages of the Sacred Book ; and in course of time it passed almost into a proverb :

Every one is jealous of another, but no man is
jealous of his son or pupil (Sanh. 105 b).

Will a father testify against his own child?
(Abod. Zar. 3 a).

To be without children was regarded as the greatest calamity :

He who has no child is as though he were
dead (Mid. R. I. 45).

It was an outstanding precept of the Jewish law

that man should not think lightly of life and its preservation; hence the caution from the days of Moses (Deut. iv. 9) 'Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy life diligently'. Naturally, therefore, this caution applied to the earliest hours of existence, and imposed upon the parent a grave responsibility with regard to his new-born child.

To ensure the health of a new-born child, it was permissible to do work by which otherwise we might profane the sanctity of the Sabbath day. To profane one Sabbath in its interests, may help to give it a life in which it may be its lot to observe many Sabbaths (Sab. 151 b; cf. 134 b).

The fourth verse of the sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel gives in a few touches a clear insight into the methods of dealing with a child at its birth; and this procedure has practically survived to the present day—the washing in water, rubbing in salt, and winding in swaddling-clothes.

The initiation of the male child into the Abrahamic covenant is a religious dedication that took place on the eighth day by the process of *circumcision*. Circumcision was the sign of its closer relationship to God, and metaphorically represented the way to physical and spiritual perfection. The body—seat of the Senses, which militate against the uplifting of man—is thereby to be healed from its brutal instincts, to be raised, and rendered nobler and better.

If the new-born male was a first-born, the father had to *redeem* him after thirty days, according to the command: 'Sanctify unto me every first born, whatever openeth the womb among the children of Israel both of man and of beast' (Exod. xiii. 2).

At the circumcision the child *received his name*: as a rule, though not exclusively, the child is named after some departed relative.

The mother's task it was to suckle her child (Ket. 59 b). She received help from nurses, which were held in high esteem by those for whom they had cared in infancy, and they were often kept for life.

There is something pathetic, nay idyllic, in the regard which Abaia paid to his former nurse, in his calling her **DN** Mother, whenever he cites some experience of hers in the art of healing (Sab. 134 a).

Just as the 'Circumcision' and the 'Redemption', so the 'weaning' of the child was made the occasion of festivity in the family.

In Southern Germany there is a beautiful old custom which is still adhered to. When the child is brought out to be circumcised, which usually takes place in the Synagogue, it is wrapped in a 'Mappa' or binder. This is marked or embroidered with words of the benediction and wishes appropriate to the occasion. After the ceremony the 'Mappa' is put away, and not used till the child is weaned,

and able to toddle. His first visit is to the Synagogue, and this is generally on one of the days on which the Sacred Scroll is taken out and read. After the Scroll has been 'held up', and shown to the assembled congregation, the child is helped to wind with his tiny fingers the 'Mappa' or binder around the Sacred Scroll, in order to testify at that early age that he forthwith throughout his whole life feels himself bound to the Holy Torah.

The importance of the duty which devolves upon the father of caring for his child, may be inferred from the passage occurring in the Talmud, Ket. 50a, where the words, 'He doeth righteousness at all times' are held to refer to the maintenance by a father of his sons and daughters while young. The same applies to the clothing, housing, and other provisions for the child (Ket. 67a).

Strictly speaking, this duty extended to the sixth year, even though the child had property of its own (Ket. 65b; 49b).

On the separation of the parents, the girls remained with the mother, while the boys remained with the father (Ket. 102b).

Only at the express desire of the mother could the boys remain with a mother till they were six years old, but at the father's cost; the judge had to decide as to the advisability of this last step, and as to whether it was for the advantage of the children (Eben Haez. 82, § 7).

Furthermore, the father's duties extended to such acts as seeing that the male child was circumcised, attending to the religious training of the child, the acquiring of some handicraft by his son, and his marriage (Kid. 29 a).

Bodily Exercise was also encouraged, inasmuch as the body was looked upon as the vessel or casket containing the soul, which was capable of raising the human creature to the likeness of his Maker. The very vitality of the Jewish race which has weathered the storm and stress of century upon century, may at all events partially be accounted for by its strict adherence to the rules and prescriptions which have for its object the production of *mens sana in corpore sano*. *Washing* and *Bathing* partook of the nature of *religious* duties. No Jewish child could be afraid of using water, for it was a religious command not to walk four paces from its couch, not to pronounce a blessing or prayer, or to partake of any refreshment, with hands unwashed. What 'sin' expressed for the Jew's spiritual and moral life, 'uncleanliness' denoted as regards his bodily life.

I. B

THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION

IF education be nothing but the conscious and ordered development of the powers of body and soul in the case of a child towards an appointed end and purpose, it goes without saying that without a knowledge of this end and purpose, without a knowledge of the law of natural development in man, and of the means whereby this training is to be acquired, thorough education cannot proceed.

If, moreover, the teacher is the representative of the Divine Creator, it naturally follows, that in the processes of his educational work he must take the Deity as his pattern. And as we believe that an Unseen Power, which we call God, leads nations and men to some destined end according to a well-defined plan, it becomes certain that his representative instructor on earth has to follow that same course. It has been said by the Jewish Sage that the pre-eminence of the teacher consists therein, that it is his endeavour to make the picture correspond to the design of the artist, and the creature approach the likeness of the Creator.

But besides Reason and Experience as elements in the educational machinery, we dare not omit the important element of *Revelation*. This teaches what

was the chief aim of the Eternal Being in Creation, namely, by a process of probation to make the world the better for the existence of the highest of His earthly creatures—man.

MAN'S DESTINY

[Without education man is the beast. Cf. Locke, Comenius, Herbart, Diesterweg.]

The destiny of man is one much higher than that of the beast. While the latter experiences but animal and material sensations, man has, in addition, intellectual faculties and spiritual feelings, as well as higher aspirations.

In four respects man resembles the lower creatures: it eats and drinks, produces offspring, it ejects, and passes away. In four ways he is like the higher creatures: his form is erect, he has the power of speech, of perception, and of reason (Mid. R. I. 8, 14).

While the beast ceases to exist with death, this life is evidently intended to be for man but a preparatory stage, one of probation and of education for the life to come.

It was the habit of Rabbi Jochanan, when finishing the book of Job, to remark: It is the lot of the human being to die, of the beast to be slaughtered. Both have to suffer death. Happy he who has been reared in the knowledge of the Law, and laboured therein, gaining

the approval of his Creator and good repute among men, departing this life with a good name (Berach. 17).

This world may be compared to an ante-chamber to the future world: prepare thyself in the ante-chamber, that thou mayest be deemed worthy to enter the inner hall (Pirké Ab. IV. 21).

Among the Greeks and Romans man regarded himself as the centre of the universe, and the gods of Olympus were looked upon as mortal beings, possessed of the frailties of humankind.

In the Bible, on the other hand, God is regarded as the highest and most perfect Being of the universe, while אָדָם, the creature 'of earth' (*homo* sprung from *humus*)—עָנִי 'weak and mortal' man, does not appear at the start as the perfect being, but one to which condition he has to aspire. Though he be of the ground, he has yet breathed within him the breath of life, by means of which he is roused to better and higher things, and by the processes of worthy action here upon earth he has to find his eternal home in Heaven.

How vividly this is typified in the narrative of the Ladder in Jacob's dream (Gen. xxviii. 10 sqq.)! While the mortal subject may lie at the foot thereof bound to earth, his thoughts may soar even to the height where God Himself stands.

Heaven and earth, spirit and body, the eternal and the perishable, this life and the Beyond, the striving upwards and downwards, are all

united in man in one accord. (Cf. the lengthy disquisition in Mid. Rab. I. 7, 8, 14.)

There is a wealth of illustration on this very point in the Talmud (T. Chagiga 11 b-12 a):

Adam at first reached from earth to heaven ;
. . . once having sinned, his power was
weakened and reduced.

His cosmopolitan destiny may be inferred from the endowments of his bodily and spiritual natures.

God took earth from all the ends of the world in the creation of man, in order that he might find his home in all places ; and that in every spot where he might die, the earth should receive him, and not say unto him, Get thee hence to the place where thou wast born (Mid. Tanch. to Pekudé ; cf. Sanhed. 38 a).

As for the first man (Adam), his body was formed from the soil of Babylon (of the lower type) ; his head from that of the land of Israel (higher and nobler than all other lands) ; and his other limbs from the remaining parts of the world (Sanhed. 38 a-b).

The faculties and capacities which he requires for his later development are born with him.

It is said, that before the birth of man he is shown and taught all the things which he will experience in life ; but, as soon as he enters the world, all is forgotten by him (Nid. 30 b).

In like manner, according to the early testimony of Holy Writ, all the evil tendencies and wilful wickedness are there, as it is stated in Genesis viii. 21,

‘The imagination of the heart of man is evil from his youth’.

Hence it is the task of education to nip in the bud the beginnings of evil before they are able to take root, and while they may be easily checked, and to bring out and develop the seeds of goodness. Education has to strengthen the faculties of the soul and spirit, so as to give the spirit dominion over the body, and to lead it nearer and nearer unto the Divine image of a perfect life: ‘Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it’ (Prov. xxii. 6).

I cannot resist the temptation of quoting here a short abstract of the sentiments expressed by Jeremiah Gotthelf in his *Joys and Toils of a School-master* :

Man is born for heaven ; his eye is directed heavenward ; and his spirit draws him upward. But his eye will not lead him, his spirit will not lift him, if they find not support and strength to help them rise upward. Place the child in a forest, and let the bear or wolf be his nurse, his body will not be lifted up, it will walk on all fours, it will howl as the wolf, and growl as the bear : its spirit will be roused only to go forth for prey and to seek its food, or the source at which it may quench its thirst. This child of man will become but a brute, and remain so.

But stretch out to the child a mother’s hand, in which his own little hand may lie and fumble ; a mother’s arm, which may raise it

from the ground ; a mother's eye, which may draw it up from the floor ; and you will see how the child will raise itself up upon its tiny feet, and clutch at its mother ; how its eye will open to catch its mother's look, and find its heaven ; and how, amid the halo of its golden locks, there will begin to smile a little angel.

However difficult it may be to define in so many words the true aim and purpose of his being, man has yet to be taught from earliest years that his destiny in the world is not mean and ignoble, but that it is one of dignity, usefulness, and ever-developing progress.

It is the Minstrel-King who sings :—

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou established strength

What is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou visitest him ?

Thou hast made him but little lower than the angels, and crownest him with honour and glory (Ps. viii).

And thus do the Jewish Sages teach :—

Reflect upon three things, and thou wilt not come within the power of sin ; Know what is above thee—a seeing Eye, and a hearing Ear, and all thy deeds written in a book (P. Aboth II. 1).

They that are born are destined to die ; and the dead to be brought to life again ; and the living to be judged and to be made conscious that God is the Maker, the Creator, the Discerner, the Judge Know also that everything will be according to the reckoning (ibid., IV. 29).

II. A

REFLECTIONS UPON EDUCATION IN GENERAL

[First teach about spiritual things and then material things. Begin with prayer. Cf. Luther, Ratichius, &c.]

(a) *The atmosphere of education must be religious.*

It is the solemn obligation of the school to ensure before all things, by means of teaching and practical training, the basis of a religious attitude in the mind of the child. On that account, not only a religious instruction has to be imparted, but a religious atmosphere has to be cultivated during school hours. 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge' (Prov. i. 7).

If we do not see that children obtain in their earliest years a religious character by introducing them to the performance of the ceremonies of religion, we shall not be able to ensure it in later life (cf. Yom. 82 a).

It is the School which confirms and continues the impulses and impressions towards religious development which the child receives from *Nature round about*, from *its own experience*, and from the influence of *its parental home*.

Nature round about.

(1) The Sabbaths and Festivals, which last from eventide to eventide, varying in time as to their beginning and ending according to the seasons of the year, have the effect of bringing God constantly before the eyes of the child as the Eternal and Unchanging Author of the days and years of life.

(2) The recital of the various prayers and blessings on different occasions, as at the change of the seasons, at the enjoyment of some new fruit, at the sudden experience of thunder and lightning, and the sight of a rainbow—all this is calculated to arouse the budding intelligence of the child to the Omnipotence of the Being whom it is asked to worship, the Creator of all things, to whom we should be eternally grateful.

(3) Such Festivals as that of *Shebuoth* (Pentecost) with its floral decorations in the Synagogue and in the home, as *Succoth* (Tabernacles) with its booths and the taking of the Four Species, are apt to awaken the child to the observation of Nature and her bounties, and to impel it to thank Him who is the Author of so much variety and beauty.

Here we have one source of education arising from the development of the religious attitude in the child's mind.

Personal experience.

True to the principle 'All Israel is surety one for the other', the Jewish people has everywhere, and practically at all times, been kept together by a religious and racial bond, and borne, in that common bond of solidarity, its sorrows and its joys.

The initiation of a child into the Abrahamic covenant—the 'Berith'—would take place amid the prayers and wishes not only of parents and relatives, but of all friends who might wish to participate in the celebration; the 'Bar Mitzvah'; the marriage of the Jew and Jewess, are *religious* festivities; the occasions of sorrow and death have equally a religious character about them. Experiences such as these must necessarily set the child athinking, and render it more susceptible of the influences of religious faith, render it willing to make, as time goes on, the sacrifices demanded of it for the sake of its race and religion.

Here is another source of education resulting from the religious awakening.

Parental influence in general and religious education.

The following sayings on this head are so self-evident that they require no further elucidation or commentary.

The greatest blessing which a man can have is to have children worthy of him (Mid. R. IV. 2);

while the world often says :

Cursed be he who has given birth to this one (Sanh. 52 a).

What the child prates on the streets, it has heard from its father or mother (Succ. 56 b).

One sheep follows the other, i. e. As the mother so the daughter (Ket. 63 a).

Here, again, is shown how the moral and religious tone of the child is influenced by parental example.

The School should seek to bring about a moral and religious training of the highest order by means of education and instruction. The very relation subsisting between pupil and teacher, the relation of pupils to one another, these have a remarkable effect upon the youthful mind at school ; and this effect becomes strengthened through the discipline which has to pervade the school as a whole.

As regards the relation of the pupil to the teacher :—

In listening to the following utterance of Abaia, the Sage (Yom. 86 a), might we not imagine we are sitting at the feet of a Schumann or some modern moral philosopher, discoursing on the ethics of teaching ?

Abaia taught : When Holy Writ says : ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God’, it implies that the Holy Name shall be loved and hallowed by thee. Learn to have intercourse with students of the Law, and let your conduct be gentle with men, so that the world may say : Happy his father who has

taught him the Law ; blessed be his teacher, who has helped him in the study thereof. Alas for those who have not occupied themselves with this learning. See the student of the Torah, how pleasant are his ways, how well balanced his actions ! Is it not said of such, ' Israel, thou art my servant, in thee am I glorified ' ? But if you have made students of the Law your companions, while your dealings with men have been aught but correct, and your language anything but conciliatory, people will exclaim : Woe unto him who has studied the Torah ! Alas for his father who has had him taught ; alas for his teacher who has taught him ! See how corrupt are his ways, how ugly his actions ! The Text applies to such, ' True they are the Lord's people, but they have departed from His land '.

Touching the relation of pupils to one another :—As pupils are more unrestrained when among themselves, and are free from that nervous fear which is generally inspired by the teacher, it may be said that intercourse between school-children, and the opportunities they have for exchanging ideas, have often a more decided influence upon their characters than even the teacher himself.

As one piece of iron sharpens the other, so does one school-fellow sharpen his companion (Taan. 7 a).

As a small piece of wood sets on fire a large piece, in like manner does one school companion fire and sharpen the wits of another, even though one has less knowledge than the other (ibid.).

This intercourse between one's disciples should, nevertheless, be allowed to proceed with some caution; for it is related that thousands of the pupils of Rabbi Akiba died between Passover and Pentecost from this cause, namely, that they had lost mutual respect for one another (Yebam. 62 b).

Caution in teaching.

The purpose of instruction in any definite religious system is to bring positive belief to the knowledge and understanding of youth, so that it be ready to devote itself heart and soul to the claims and demands of that Religion. As far as concerns Judaism, we have its revelation in the Holy Writings. Hence instruction in the tenets of Judaism must be based upon the history and teachings contained therein. Truth, that is, the faithful interpretation of the Bible narrative and its contents, as far as we know it, is therefore the first essential.

Be cautious in teaching, for an error in study may rise to the proportion of a presumptuous sin (Pirké Ab. IV. 16).

He who causes the words of the Torah to have a meaning other than that generally accepted, such a one, even though he possess Biblical knowledge and good deeds, has no share in the world to come (Pirké Ab. III. 15).

Ye sages, be heedful of your words, lest ye incur the penalty of exile, and be carried captive to a place of evil waters (i. e. where your teach-

ing would be misinterpreted), and the disciples who come after you drink thereof and die, the result being that the Name of God be profaned (Pirké Ab. I. 11).

This further consideration dare, however, not be overlooked or neglected in practice. Though truth must not be sacrificed in the course of instruction, yet great care should be exercised while dwelling upon such a theme as variety in religious views. The idea of the brotherhood of man dare not be allowed to suffer in the minds of the children taught; so that, in later years, intolerance against one's fellow-men of another creed should not tarnish human conduct. True tolerance is found in that form of belief which holds firmly to its own way of thinking, and yet has respect and consideration for the right of others to maintain their own form of faith.

See how the Talmudic Sage expressed this very idea! Expanding the words of Malachi, 'Have we not all one Father; hath not one God created us?' Rabbi Simon ben Gamaliel remarks: 'Jerusalem will in the days to come unite within herself all nations and kingdoms . . . just as, in the dawn of the world, all the waters were gathered together unto one place' (Aboth de R. N. 35).

Can liberality of thought or breadth of view in religious matters (the world calls it by the ugly name 'toleration') go further than this latter statement or the sentiments expressed in the following sentences?

The righteous among the Gentiles are held worthy of sharing in the bliss of the world to come (Tosephta).

Anyone who denies idol-worship may be called a Jew (Meg. 13 a).

To believe in the Shepherd of Israel and God as the Creator of the universe is one and the same thing (Yalkut Shim. on the words 'And they believed in the Lord', Exod. xiv. 31).

In return for my love, they hate me; yet I pray for them (*sc.* 'the seventy nations'): we rely upon prayer (*ibid.*, § 782).

It is our bounden duty to support the poor of the non-Jew together with our own, to visit their sick as well as our own, and to bury their dead as we would our own—all for the ends of peace (Gitt. 61 a).

It is, therefore, not surprising that our Rabbis, holding the doctrine of universal brotherhood, believed that knowledge was the heritage of all mankind, and not the exclusive privilege of any people, caste, or class. It was to impress this truth on the world that, in the words of our Sages (Mechilta, יתרו, § 5), 'the Holy Law was delivered by Almighty Wisdom to the Israelites in the wilderness, in a public place, open to all people, and not in Palestine itself, in order not to give occasion for strife among the tribes, when one of these more

than the other might claim it as its special prerogative and exclusive right'.

As somewhat germane to this idea, we might here refer to the following attitude on the part of Judaism. Should any one present himself in our days, and express his desire to accept the Jewish Faith, we have to speak to him as follows before admitting him: What do you see in wishing to become one of us? Consider that Israel is still subjected to scorn and insult, to penalties and tortures. If he replies, I know this full well; I would be worthy to share their burdens; we must then insist, and say to him: Reflect, that when hitherto you have partaken of things forbidden to us, it was not accounted to you as a sin: when you have laboured on the Sabbath, you incurred no guilt. But in undertaking the obligations of our Faith, the one and the other would call down upon your head a great punishment. True it is, that the reward of such as observe what is prescribed is great—that Heaven is in store for the righteous. Should the aspirant falter on hearing these words, let him depart (Yeb. 47 a).

(b) *Education must be in accord with natural conditions.*

[Nature our Instructress: Teach upon nature's plan: The mind develops like a plant. Cf. Ratichius, Comenius, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Diesterweg.]

As the gardener has to understand the nature of the plant which he expects to spring forth in all

its beauty, so must the educator know and understand the nature of the being that is to develop into man and womanhood. This knowledge may be gained in the following ways :

- (1) By observing the individual characteristics of the child.

Each child's temperament has to be closely watched and investigated ; and this will contribute largely to the proper form of discipline to be employed in the various circumstances that arise. We have to think out and discover what part of a child's individual character has to be encouraged and preserved, and what is wrong with it that has to be suppressed. Such diversity in individual temperament and characteristics is as varied and great as is the difference in the human face. In this matter the teacher has to start at the very beginning with each and every child.

In a certain sense, we learn more from observing the habits of children than they learn from us.

Rab once met the elementary teacher R. Samuel ben Silat in the garden. Hallo, my friend, he cried unto him ; Have you given up your profession which you were wont to ply so faithfully ? No, indeed, replied the teacher ; it is twelve or thirteen years since I last visited my garden, and yet my thoughts are centred upon that garden which I tended, my children of the school (Bab. Bat. 8 b ; cf. "מררשא, רש"י).

I have learnt much from my teachers, and

more from my companions, but most of all I have learnt from my pupils (Taan. 7 a).

Our knowledge as to the best way of dealing with children will be increased

(2) By recalling our own youth.

In childhood we deem ourselves grown ups ; now arrived at old age, we regard ourselves as children (Bab. Kam. 92 b).

(3) By reflecting upon the failure of efforts for the culture of those placed in our charge.

Seest thou a pupil to whom learning becomes hard and heavy as iron, it is because his elementary education has not been based upon a proper foundation . . . it is the teacher who is at fault (Taan. 7 b and 8 a).

Errors once imbibed are with difficulty eradicated (Bab. Bat. 21 b).

(4) By observing other teachers and the result of their labours. The teacher must accordingly consider and study the type of the best educators, in order to imitate their methods and emulate them.

(5) By studying faithful biographies of the great, the lives of men that have existed throughout history ; the stories of the Patriarchs, the men and women of the Bible, the heroes of ancient and modern times, the giants of the Talmud, such as Hillel, R. Akiba, Gamaliel, &c.

We must be very careful not to anticipate nature, and not to force the capacity of the child. The penalty is a heavy one if the child's mental powers

are overtaxed. Not infrequently a child has to pay for neglect in this rule with its health, when both body and mind have to suffer in the end.

He who keeps his child too closely applied to study risks the life of that child (Ket. 50 a).

Regard must be had to the pupil's age. The infant is not to be trained as the older boy or girl, nor the older boy or girl receive instruction as the riper youth.

The little ones according to their strength, the youths according to theirs, women according to their ability, and the older ones according to their powers (Mid. R. II. 5).

(c) *Education to embrace the whole of man.*

[Cf. Fröbel, Diesterweg.]

Education must be general, in this sense, that it take all the faculties into consideration, and not one at the expense of the other. Of what value is it to possess a vivid imagination and a reliable memory, if reasoning power and clear judgment be wanting?

A certain person had read all the books available on religious literature, but he had not dived deeply and with intelligence. At his death, Rabbi Nachman was asked to pronounce an oration over him. What did he say? He spoke the following words over his remains: 'Alas, the basket choke-full of books has departed!' (Meg. 28 b).

Furthermore, one has to guard against the following errors :

(1) *Hasty Judgment and Temper.*

To regard a good child as the model of perfection, is as unfair and false as to consider a bad child incorrigible.

Be patient as Hillel, and not hasty as Shammai (Sab. 30 b).

(2) *Favoritism.*

No more than the parent dare the teacher prefer one child to the other. Our Sages remark, 'It was through the two coins which Jacob gave to Joseph that jealousy was aroused among his brethren, with the ultimate result that our ancestors had to go to Egypt' (Sab. 10b and Meg. 16 b).

(3) *Severity and Harshness.*

As the father, so the teacher dare not intimidate the child by extreme and severe measures (Gitt. 6 b).

A man who strikes his grown-up son (and the same may be said of a teacher who treats a grown-up pupil in like manner) has to be seriously chastised, for he transgresses the command, 'Thou shalt not place a stumbling-block in the way of the blind,' which the commentator *Rashi* explains, that the son might thereby turn a rebel and be led into sin (Moed Kat. 17 a).

II. B

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

[Cf. Basedow, Pestalozzi, Ratichius, Diesterweg.]

THE methods of instruction conveyed in the sentences of the Talmudists are so clear and comprehensive, that the uninitiated might easily be taken off their guard, and be led to suppose that the Talmudists copied these regulations as regards method from Diesterweg and other well-known representatives of Pedagogics. It is a pity that such men spent the best years of their life in setting up a body of rules for instruction based upon the philosophic systems with which they were acquainted, or upon the experiences of their own personal observation, while they might have utilised to great advantage what was ready to hand in the rules and maxims of the Jewish Sages over a thousand years old.

(1) The teaching has to be commensurate with the age and capacity of the school-child. Hence the prescription: At five years old, *Mikra*, the language and substance of the Holy Writings; at ten years old, the *Mishna*, the study of practical laws and duties; at fifteen years old, *Gemara*, the deeper study of the science of religion.

God revealed himself on Sinai to the adult,

the aged, and the children according to the capacity of each class; and on similar lines should education proceed (Mid. R. II. 3).

As long as the child is young, and its mind is not engrossed with other things, it will easily grasp what is taught; for the knowledge acquired in childhood and youth is bound to remain in the mind 'as ink upon new paper' (Pirké Ab. IV. 25).

(2) The teacher shall be sparing with his words. He should talk rather than preach. Explanations should be succinct and clear, otherwise they tire, and are useless for children. Hence the dictum:

Always teach your pupils in the shortest manner (Pesach. 3 b).

(3) *Multum non multa* was another fundamental law with the Jewish Sage.

Grasp much, and you will retain nothing; grasp a little, and you will retain something (Rosh. Hash. 4 b; Yoma 80 a).

He who gathers knowledge by degrees will increase it (cf. Erub. 54 a, b).

(4) The teacher has to go over every sentence thoroughly, and where necessary to supply proof.

The teacher should make the subject of study clear to his pupils by means of illuminating proofs (ibid.).

Turn the word about, and explain it, i.e. elucidate from its various sides, to test the

knowledge and reasoning of the pupil (Sab. 55 b).

(5) But when the deeper meaning of a passage is unintelligible to a child, the teacher should not waste time with useless niceties; he should teach it but the simple meaning, and defer the fuller explanation to the time when the child's reasoning powers are more fully developed, and its general knowledge has become wider (cf. Sab. 63 a).

This was part of the advice given by a Rabbi Eliezer on his sick-bed to his disciples, in response to their request: 'Teacher, inform us as to what should be our course of action, if we would be worthy to inherit future bliss.' 'Restrain your children', he said, 'from prying into things and over-speculation, place them in the lap of the wise students of the Law' (Berach. 28 b).

(6) Instruction should be interesting, so that the pupil should be anxious to acquire knowledge.

Rabbah, before he began to teach his pupils, was in the habit of introducing his remarks with something bright and sparkling; by this means the scholars were put in a joyous mood. He then proceeded in all gravity to the subject of his discourse (Pesach. 117 a).

R. Akiba, R. Meir and others would cross-question their pupils, so as to sustain their attention and sharpen their wits (Erub. 13 a, b).

Rabbah, in his lectures on anatomy, would

vary his theme, in order to move his disciple Abaia to ask questions (cf. Chul. 43 b).

(7) The teacher should observe in the various subjects of study graduated steps in instruction ; he should also teach about things distant by that which is near, from the known to the unknown, from the simple to the complex.

He who observes this method of order is like a tree which yields its fruit in due season ; but he who does not observe such order of succession is like the chaff which the wind blows away (cf. Abod. Zar. 19 a-19 b).

If a man endeavours to gain information by cramming, his knowledge will grow less, while he who gathers his knowledge gradually, and in small quantities, will find his knowledge increase (ibid.).

A student should derive his information from more than one source, and he will be repaid for his labour (ibid.).

If what has been acquired has been well ordered in the mind, you will be able to add new knowledge (Taan. 8 a).

(8) A teacher should teach and explain the lesson at least four times ; and if this be insufficient, he has to repeat it even more times, until the scholar knows it fluently.

Moses repeated to Aaron four times the explanation of the Torah which he had received from God. Aaron did the same to his sons,

they to the elders, and the elders taught these unto the whole people four times over (Erub. 54 b ; Mid. R. III. 3).

‘And thou shalt teach them diligently’ (Deut. xxxi. 19), i. e. the pupil has to be taught so many times until he understands the subject (ibid.).

(9) Pupils should be encouraged to repeat the lesson.

He who does not repeat what he has learnt, is like one who sows but does not reap (Sanh. 99 a).

It is undoubtedly more profitable to repeat one hundred and one times than but a hundred times (Chag. 9 b).

A man may forget in two years what it has taken him ten years to acquire (Ab. de R. N. 24).

(10) As a help to memory children should be given mnemonic signs **סימנין** or **ציונים** (Erub. 54 b). [Cf. Sully.] This was done in various ways :

(a) The teacher would bring the contents of the subject of study into close association with one of the passages known fluently to the pupil occurring in the Bible or Talmud (cf. e. g. such passages as Ket. 72 b and Menach. 43 b).

(b) Or, it was brought into connection with some well-known place or expression mentioned in the Bible (Erub. 54 a).

(11) Pupils should learn audibly.

Open thy mouth (i. e. speak out), so that the Torah remain with thee, and that thou mayest live long by carrying it out (Erub. 54 a).

Beruria, wife of Rabbi Meir, called the attention of one of the disciples to the fact that he was studying quietly, and she bade him speak out (ibid. 53 b).

A pupil of Rabbi Eliezer forgot in three years what he had learnt, because he studied without speaking (ibid.).

(12) Learning should proceed in sing-song, i. e. the words of the subject to be learnt should be spoken or recited with intonation, cantillation (cf. Luther).

He who reads the Bible without cantillation, and the Mishna without intonation, of him it is said: 'I gave them precepts, which are not good', i. e. the goodness of which they do not value; upon which the *Tosephot* comments: People were wont to study the Mishna with sing-song, since they learnt it orally, and they were thus the better able to remember it (Meg. 32).

The swaying of the body during study is supposed to have a similar effect on the memory.

The author of the Commentary on the Mishna **תפארת ישראל**, Israel Lipschütz (1782–1860), Chief Rabbi of Danzig, one of the teachers of my revered father **ז"ל**, has some very pertinent observations on this passage of the Talmudic treatise, Meg. 32, touching the influence of the habit of Cantillation on the peculiarities found in the phraseology of the Mishna itself as it has come down to us (cf. Erachin, IV. 1).

II. C

DETAILS OF INSTRUCTION

HAVING seen what were the general rules and methods observed by the Jewish people in the education of their children, we have now to consider what formed the curriculum of study, and what were the details of instruction.

1. *Religion.*

God's people had necessarily to regard the Law Divine, religious knowledge, as the Alpha and Omega of all learning. It formed the centre round which all other subjects of study revolved. The Religion, derived from and built upon the Bible and the Talmud, served as the fount and origin of Jewish learning, hence both the seed and crown of Israelitish culture and training. From this source, sprung from hoary antiquity, each successive age of Jewish life drew new inspiration and fresh activity, as it did in its more youthful state. Their religion entered into each and every phase of human experience. It was part and parcel of the existence of the Jew; to understand and to love it was the business of his life from earliest years even unto death, maybe unto martyrdom.

Mere intellectual growth and advancement, the striving after material things, the quest after a

knowledge of languages and profane learning, these dared not stand in the way of the satisfaction of spiritual yearnings and the search after higher things. All branches of worldly wisdom were bound up with the highest wisdom—Religion, and were regarded but as means to that end.

Thus says Maimonides, even in the case of such a subject as Arithmetic, e. g., it is taught for the purpose of exercising the mental powers, so that thereby religious truths may be the more easily proved, and the mind gain strength to dive more deeply into the knowledge of God, of the Heavenly.

It was the same with the study of Natural Science. It is his religion that places the Israelite in the Temple of Nature, which is God's spacious temple, in which man is expected to act as the Priest, his reasoning and spiritual powers having been developed, and he having prepared himself by their means to approach nearer and nearer unto his Maker, in whose image he was created.

Holy Writ begins with the story of the Creation of inanimate things and beings that are upon the earth, and of man, and tells of the development of the entire human race.

The greatness of God and his attributes are not only declared in the Book of Revealed Religion, but also in the Great Book of Nature. As it was stated in praise of King Solomon that he could speak of the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall, of the beasts and birds and creeping things and the fish, we might adduce evidence from Holy Writ to

prove, that religious instruction could not, or should not, be devoid of the study of Natural Science and its laws.

Bible-teaching included the knowledge of *History*. The Bible teaches how the individual grew into a family, then developed into tribes, later into a people, and how the various races stepped forward to take their part in the leading events of history.

There could, of course, be no question of a special catechism for teaching or a manual of systematic religious instruction ; for no teaching was divorced from Religion—all learning was related to it. School and home, teaching and life, instructor and parent—all form one unbroken chain in the religious training of the Jewish youth. Even the so-called ‘Bible-History’ lesson did not exist ; it was anticipated and rendered almost unnecessary by the fact, that the portions of the Pentateuch and the *Haphtaroth* (Selections from the Prophets) were included in the cycle of reading in the original throughout the year. Moreover, even to this day it has remained with observant Jews a pious duty to see that their children, as soon as they are able to read, are introduced to the custom of reading the weekly portion (*Sedrah*) twice in the original and once in the Targum (Aramaic) rendering, and encouraged to do so for themselves as a home-reading lesson.

Note.—Initiation into this duty began at a very early age. In some countries, as soon as the child is able to babble the blessing that ‘God had given Israel the gift of the Torah’, it is taken on the Festival of *Shebuoth* or on *Simchath Torah* to the Synagogue,

and has read to him the passage, Genesis xlviii, containing the blessing of Jacob to his grandchildren: he is permitted before his thirteenth year to recite publicly in the Synagogue during the Service the portion from the Prophets (*Haph-tara*): at thirteen years of age he becomes *Bar Mitzvah*, meaning 'Son of the Commandment', that is, he has the obligation of fulfilling the commands in the Bible in the same way as the adolescents, and he becomes personally responsible for his errors, for which until this age his father had made himself responsible.

According to the Bible, religious instruction consists in discoursing on the teachings and precepts of Holy Writ, the significance of the ceremonial portions, and the history of the Jewish people (cf. Deut. iv. 9, 10; v. 1-5; vi. 21-4). But the Holy Writings and the various branches of religious instruction increased to such an extent, that the Mishna (Aboth V. 24) ordained that the range of instruction had to cover three parts:

- (1) The Written Law, or the twenty-four Books of Holy Writ.
- (2) The Mishna or the Oral Law, which interprets the Written Law.
- (3) The Talmud, i. e. the scientific study which enables one to form deductions, to institute comparisons, to decide questions according to traditional rules, in a word, to understand the Law, fundamentally and thoroughly, in all its aspects and bearings.



A man should divide his days into three parts, the first for *Mikra*, the second for *Mishna*, and the third for *Talmud* (Kid. 30 a; Ab. Zar. 19 b).

2. *Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic.*

Reading, writing, and arithmetic were cultivated among the Israelites at an early period, as can be proved from the inscriptions and monuments which have been preserved. That the Talmudists not only did not lag behind, but developed this field of knowledge, is clearly manifest from many sides.

As soon as the child had mastered the reading of Holy Writ, a beginning was made with the exegesis of the Text; and *Torath Cohanim*—the third book of Moses—was, as a rule, the starting-point.

Why should the earliest instruction of the Jewish child begin with the passage concerning the Sacrifices, and not with that of the Creation? Because young children are innocent and pure, and the Sacrifice was the symbol of purity. Let, then, the pure and innocent ones come and occupy themselves with the doctrine concerned with the restoration of the soul's purity—the object of the sacrificial system (Mid. R. III. 1).

It should be observed that the much-prized 'Hamiltonian' method of teaching language, regarded at the time as a perfectly new and remarkable discovery, was none other than that which was in vogue with the Jews in their schools ages before in

the teaching of Hebrew (*vide* Schmidt, Encyclop. V, p. 752). The teaching of Grammar was not neglected. Grammar was called דִּיקּוּן (from דָּק small, fine), i. e. the careful and finer interpretation of words.

In the reading of the 'Shema' it is ordained, that great care and correctness be exercised in pronouncing the words, so that he who reads this passage faultily should not be guilty of not carrying out his duty, nay more, of giving expression to the acknowledgment of idolatry (Mishna Berach. II. 3).

The inhabitants of Judaea, in contrast with those of Galilee, were very particular as regards their choice of language; hence the fact that the knowledge of the Torah was preserved by them (Erub. 53 a).

An elementary teacher who is exact in his knowledge is termed דִּיקָן; the question is debated as to whether he is to be preferred to one possessed of more knowledge but not as exact in imparting it (Bab. Bat. 21 a).

Writing must have been known to the early Israelites, as is proved by such passages as Deut. vi. 9; Judges viii. 14; Isaiah x. 19.

Coming to later times, writing was practised as well as reading. The letters were written for the pupils on a big slate לוח for common instruction, or on smaller slates or tablets provided for each child. Pupils who were able to read received a tablet or scroll for committing things to memory, on which the first

letter alone of each word of the sentence to be repeated was written (Erub. 5, 97 ; Gitt. 60 a).

When the enemy comes against us, we shall oppose them with our writing-styles, . . . is the cry of the school-child in Bethar in the revolt of Bar Cochba (Gitt. 58 a).

Great importance was laid upon faultless copying and correct books.

If a written text did not exist, it would be impossible to repeat the lesson (Moed. Kat. 16 b).

Choose a faultless book for your son to teach him to read, for it is hard to eradicate a fault once made (Pesach. 112 a).

The Correctors of the Books received a salary derived from the Treasury, out of the offerings in the Temple (Ket. 106 a).

It is evident from several passages in the Bible that the Israelites must have had a knowledge of at least the four simple rules of Arithmetic. The very details in the construction of the early Tabernacle and the later Temple prove this. The Doctors of the Talmud had to deal with matters which involved a higher degree of mathematical calculations (see pp. 70-71).

It is interesting to note that there are clear traces in the Talmud of *Object-lesson* teaching, which often overlapped with the system of Mnemonics. The most striking passage occurs in the Treatise Sabbath 104 a, and is as follows :—

The נ and ב stand for בִּינָה בְּלִמּוּד 'Gain learning';

ג and ד for גמול דלים 'Be kind to the poor'; the foot of the ג protruding towards the ד suggests, that the benevolent should stretch forth and search out the poor; whilst the ד with its back turned towards ג 'the benefactor' reminds one, that to avoid the feeling of shame in the one helped, the help must be given unknown to the recipient,—when his back is turned. The ה and ו reminds of the Name of God יהוה; the זחטיכל are the initial letters of the expression זון הן טוב ירושה כתר לערב meaning, that 'If you exercise benevolence in the manner indicated above, you will gain maintenance, favour, happiness, possessions, and the crown of immortality'; מאמר סתום and מאמר פתוח מ"ם stands for implying: 'Understand that you will not unravel all things, for now the statement will appear clear and open, now closed and mysterious'; נ"ן hints at the idea נאמן פשוט נאמן כפוף 'If you remain constant (to God) when bowed down, you will be constant in ordinary times'; ט and י recall the thought עשׂה סמנים 'Make for yourself signs (mnemonics) in learning, and fix the points'; פ"ף suggests פה פתוח and פה סתום 'In teaching let your mouth be at times open and free, at other times closed and veiled'; צ"ץ may stand for צדיק פשוט and צדיק כפוף 'Righteousness in poverty will mean righteousness in sufficiency'; ק speaks of קדוש 'Thee All-Holy'; ר is the first letter of רשע 'The wicked'; the ר with its back to the ק suggests that 'holiness' is strange to the wicked;

whilst the foot of the ׀ stretching towards the ׀ points to the efforts we should employ in causing the return of the wicked, stretching out to him timely help; the ש reminds of שקר 'Falsehood', and the ׀ the last letter of אמת 'truth'; the sight of the ׀ standing on two feet, and the ש on one foot, teaches the lesson that falsehood has no firm footing, and that not falsehood but truth will prevail.

3. *Geography, History, and Nature Study.*

According to the explanation given above, that the Law of God was regarded as the basis of all instruction, and that all other branches of learning were but subsidiary, or rather were taken into account in order to illustrate and interpret the teaching of religion, we can scarcely expect any systematic instruction in subjects such as Geography, History, and Natural Science. That a knowledge of these branches of learning, however, did exist, cannot be gainsaid. And as regards

Geography

the curriculum of instruction would embrace almost all the known parts of the then habitable world:—

The peoples of the North, the Japhetites; the Southern lands with its people, the Hamites; Western Asia with its peoples, the Semites; the lands in which the Jews resided, or in which they stayed for a time, their commercial relations conditioning a more intimate

geographical knowledge of the same; Egypt, lands through which the Israelites wandered; Palestine, and its adjoining territories; these extending in the course of later history to Assyria and Babylon; and after the destruction of the Temple to colonies in the chief countries of Asia, Africa and Europe.

History.

In merely observing the various religious Feasts in the course of the year, the Jewish child would see perhaps the most vivid object lessons in history.

Special historical works did not exist; there was at first no occasion for them, inasmuch as the Bible itself was at one and the same time the Divine Word and also a compendium of the history of the people of Israel.

Note.—We, nevertheless, do meet with traces of historical writings, as the *Sepher Hayashar*. Of the annalists—the *מוֹכִירִים* of the royal courts—nothing historical has come down to us. Of later times we possess the Books of the Maccabees, Josephus, *Seder Olam Rabba*, *Seder Olam Zutta*, &c.

Natural Science.

In the treatise *Zeraim* we find mentioned a large number of kinds of plants and animals.

The third chapter of the *T. Chulin* is partly taken up with the anatomy of animals; we read therein of the experiments and discussions with their disciples which the Rabbis had on this subject.

R. Huna once asked his son Rabbah why he did not attend the lectures on personal hygiene

delivered by R. Chisda? Because, replied the latter, he is concerned with worldly things. What! rejoined the father; he is engaged with matters which are necessary for the preservation of human life, and this you call worldly. They are just the things that are of the highest value (Sabbath 82 a).

Pay respect to the physician before thou hast need of his services (Yalkut Shimoni, § 920 a; *vide* Ecclesiasticus xxxviii. 1-15).

The knowledge of the chemical art must to a certain extent have been required in the preparation of the incense and the various ointments to which reference is made in Holy Writ.

4. *Mathematics and Astronomy.*

It is evident from the circumstances in which the New Moon was proclaimed, and upon which too the fixing of the Festivals depended, that mathematics and astronomy were fostered and cultivated at the time of the Temple. The New Moon could only be fixed on the evidence of witnesses, as to how and when they observed the crescent of the Moon. Rabbi Gamaliel had hanging in his loft tables representing the Moon and its phases, and it was upon these that he made the witnesses point out in which phase they had noticed the Moon's appearance (Mishna Rosh Hash. II. 8).

Samuel, the astronomer, says of himself that 'he was as familiar with the streets of the heavens as with those of Nehardea' (Berach. 58 b). The tractates *Kilayim*, *Erubin*, *Succah*, and *Mikvaoth* demand for

their understanding a certain degree of higher mathematics. But that even these disciplines served only for the better knowledge of the Law of God is proved by the statement in Pirké Aboth III. 18, 'Astronomy and Geometry are the periphery of wisdom'.

5. *Foreign Languages.*

The knowledge of languages seems to have been held in such high esteem among the Israelites, that it was regarded as one of the greatest calamities of Divine punishment to be exiled to a land, the language of which they could not understand (Deut. xxviii. 49).

It is, moreover, a tradition that no one could be elected a member of the Great Synhedrion who did not understand seventy languages. We must bear in mind that at the time it was the belief that there were but seventy languages upon the face of the globe.

Each word that proceeded from the mouth of God divided itself into seventy languages (Sab. 88 b).

Intercourse with neighbouring states as Egypt and Syria brought in its wake the knowledge of foreign languages; and this increased under the dominion of the Greeks and Romans. Many of the objects used were named in Greek (the Temple vessels were marked with Greek letters—Mishna Shek. III. 2, &c., and Latin names); while Greek and Latin words are found in the Talmudic writings interspersed in the Hebrew and Aramaic original.

The following four languages seem to have been held in special esteem: Greek, as it sounds well in song on account of its rhythm; Latin in battle on account of its full-toned power; Syriac in elegy on account of its many hollow vowel sounds; and Hebrew in speech on account of its clear ring (see Bab. Kam. 83 a).

‘Let not Aramaic (פֶּרְסִי) be indifferent to thee, for see God himself deemed it proper to make use of it in The Books of Holy Writ’ (Mid. R. I. 74).

‘Greek’ was particularly favoured. From among the many passages in which reference to the language is made, we might adduce:—

The beauty of Japhet shall be in the tents of Shem, i.e. its language—the Greek—is the finest among all the children of Jacob (Meg. 9 b).

The Holy Writings, Torah, Prophets, and the Hagiographa might be rendered into Greek (ibid., 8 b).

The Torah itself could only be rendered into Greek as it was only this language that could reproduce the true sense of the original (ibid.).

Naturally in this last expression the *Septuagint* would come to our mind.

From a passage in Yodayim (IV. 6) the view (now exploded) has been hazarded that ‘Homer’ (ספרי מִפְּרִי, מִרִּירָה or מִרִּירָה; cf. T. Chulin, 60b, marginal note on the Talmudic text), was known, as well as other Greek works, and perused to the annoyance

of the Zealots ; and there is another passage (Chag. 15 b), where in speaking of 'Acher' it says, that he was constantly singing Greek songs, and that on one occasion, while in the House of Learning, several ספרי מונין are said to have fallen from his person. [Is מונין perhaps a corrupt form of ὑμνοί ?].

The passages in Bab. Kam. 82 b-83 a, and Sotah 49 a-b, in which the prohibition occurs regarding the learning of 'Greek *Wisdom*', may perhaps refer to its false sophistical deductions or fallacies. Maimonides brings them into relation with some Greek secret language.

Furthermore, as regards the curious expression in the Talmud, that we should study the Greek language only at the time when it is neither day nor night (Menach. 99 b), might it perhaps refer to the then division of the hours of day, the command 'Thou shall study the Law by day and night' being understood to mean, that religious instruction, which had to be given by day, i. e. early in the morning, and by night, i. e. late at night, dared not be interrupted by, certainly not exchanged for, the study of Greek? From the words of the Talmud לשון יוני לחור חכמת יוניית לחור (Bab. Kam. 83 a), it will be seen that the doctors of the Talmud distinguished between the 'language' and the 'wisdom' or 'philosophy' of the Greeks' (*vide* p. 13).

6. *Physical Exercise.*

Instruction in physical exercise seems not to have escaped notice, for in the first place every Israelite

was bound to teach his son swimming (Kid. 29 a); and secondly, mention is made of several Talmudic heroes who excelled in feats of athletics.

It is said of R. Simon Ben Gamaliel that, on the occasion of the *שִׁמְחַת בֵּית הַשְּׁוֹאבִּים* (Water-drawing Festival), he would take in his hands eight burning torches, and throw them into the air in such manner, that while throwing one up he would catch the other coming down, and one would not come in contact with the other (Succ. 53 a).

He would also, in the act of prostrating himself, press his two thumbs into the floor, and bend his head so low, as to be able to kiss the marble pavement of the floor; he would then raise himself—a feat which no one else was able to imitate (*ibid.*, *vide* Rashi).

Similar exercises are related of R. Levi with eight knives, exhibited before the compiler of the Mishna; of R. Samuel with eight wine cups before Shabur, the Persian king; and of Abaia with eight eggs before Rabbah (*ibid.*).

At the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, there was erected below the citadel, i. e. in the neighbourhood of the Temple, a Gymnasium (1 Maccab. i. 14), and later Jason, the High Priest, set up one in Jerusalem (2 Maccab. iv. 9, 12). Later still, Roman circuses were transplanted into Palestine.

It is true the Jews protested against these innovations, for not only was it a question of shocking

the morals of the Censors (as those engaging in the sport were half-naked), but also that it drew the Jew away from the purer and cleaner atmosphere of his religious observances, and drew him nearer to Hellenic or Roman influences.

III. A

THE LOCALE OF THE SCHOOL

As soon as the practice of individual instruction, which was originally imposed upon the father, gave way to more systematic instruction imparted in common by means of the teacher, the necessity for supplying school accommodation arose. Through the absence of such suitable accommodation, the first attempts at giving instruction in common came to grief; for vacant plots or fenced places were not always available, or sometimes the weather was not sufficiently favourable to comply with the rule for holding classes in the open, as had often been the case hitherto (Sab. 127 a). It was R. Yehuda Hanasi who was the first to lay down the law that instruction should only be imparted in places that were enclosed (Moed Kat. 16).

At the start, schools for children were part and parcel of the Synagogue called *בית הכנסת* or *בית כנשתא* (Bab. Bat. 21), either in the place of worship itself or in the precincts thereof; the *חזן בית הכנסת* (Mac. 22 b), the religious overseer or attendant, our 'Minister', acted as the teacher. Thus it is said of the Synagogues in Jerusalem that each had a *בית ספר*, where Reading and Bible were taught, and a *בית הלמוד*, where the more advanced pupils

received instruction in higher lore. This naturally did not exclude teachers from receiving children for instruction in their own houses **בית ספרא** (Mid. R. III. 9).

But a beginning was soon made in erecting school-houses, which bore the name **ב' מדרשא** or **אסכולא** (*σχολή*).

The teachers in these were named **מקרי ינוקא** or **מקרי דרדקי** (*μικροδιδασκτικός*) (Kid. 30 a).

The school-house was not to be built in the crowded part of the town, as the teaching might be disturbed through the noise of the traffic (Pesach. 112a);

A man residing in the same street as a teacher could not be prevented from qualifying as a teacher (*Yoré Deah* 245, § 22);

Nor could any one teacher take exception to another teacher setting up in his immediate neighbourhood on the plea of rivalling his interests (*ibid.*)

Until the days of R. Gamaliel the pupils received their instruction standing; from his time onward they were provided with seats, as they were too weak to stand (Meg. 21 a); the teacher sat at the head, and the pupils were round him in a circle, so that all could see and hear him.

Rabbi said of himself that he would have grasped the subject-matter taught in the school of R. Meir much better, had he not sat at the

back of his teacher; for it states (Isaiah xxx. 20),
'Thine eyes shall see thy teachers' (Erub., 13 b ;
cf. Sot. 49 a).

Maimonides unfolds in the following words a picture of the appearance of such a school. The teacher sat at the top, the scholars were round about him as the crown round the head, so that each might see the teacher, and hear his words. The teacher did not sit on a chair, and the pupils on the ground, but all were seated either on chairs or on the floor. At first it was the custom for the teacher to sit, and the pupils to stand; but shortly before the destruction of the Second Temple, it was arranged that both pupil and teacher be seated (Yad Hach. T. T. IV. 2 and its various commentaries).

III. B.

CLASS-SYSTEM AND NUMBER OF PUPILS

THAT some sort of class arrangement existed is fairly clear from the very denomination, **בית ספר** 'House (or 'Room') of the Book', in which Reading was taught, and Bible instruction was given, and **בית הלמוד** 'House (or 'Room') of Learning', where higher branches of learning were taught; and it may also be inferred from the very ordinance that 'The child is to be brought from one Synagogue (School) to the other' (Bab. Bat. 21 a). This might even be evident from the nature of the triple form of instruction, namely, Bible, Mishna and Gemara, to each of which five years were devoted; consequently special curricula for the lower and higher degrees of learning had to be instituted: and these were entrusted to different kinds of teachers, and held in different locales.

Any one versed in Talmudic lore understands that a boy, say, thirteen years old, of average capacity, will without difficulty understand a passage in the Treatise *Berachoth*, but it takes some years before the same student will be able to grasp some of the more intricate and abstruse portions of this stupendous work.

Such intricacies and difficulties in Talmudic lore

were realised to the extent that they gave rise to the saying, 'Is the learning of Gemara no more than singing a tune?' (Sab. 106 b).

Expert teachers in each subject in the sense in which we now use the term did not exist, nor was there any need of them, as the subjects of study were limited and unchanging. What did happen was, that there were teachers of various degrees of culture, of varying experience, of more or less love for the subject or special branch of it, and so there arose special teachers for Bible, for the Mishna, and for the Gemara.

We need not be surprised that the teacher of a higher standard took a higher social place; and we can therefore easily understand the utterance of R. Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, when lamenting the decline of the times (Sot. 49 a):—

Since the destruction of the Temple, the Doctors of the Law have sunk to the level of elementary teachers, the elementary teachers to that of the Synagogue attendants, and these latter to the level of the common herd.

(This whole passage to the end of the Treatise is most pathetic.)

The 'overcrowding' of classes was unknown in the Jewish school system of old. There is a passage in *Baba Bathra* (21 a) which demanded 'One teacher is to have twenty-five pupils; and if there be fifty then two teachers must be appointed; if there be forty, the teacher is to have an assistant master'. Such assistant masters were recruited from the older

pupils qualified to teach; they bore the name ריש דיוכנא—the first in the school-form—the captain or monitor. As *Rashi* explains *in loco*, these partook of the instruction given with the others, and then were told off to repeat with the weaker intellects that which had been taught, so that the latter received a double portion of the instruction given.

III. C

THE TEACHER

‘The educator must himself be an example.’—Cf. Rousseau.

‘No one can train, if he be not trained.’—Cf. Diesterweg.

1. *Qualifications.*

IN the brief survey of the history of schools, we saw that the Rabbis considered the existence of the world dependent upon the schools which functioned therein ; and it therefore follows as a corollary that teachers were looked upon as the saviours and guardians of each town :

A roving commission of foremost Rabbis was once sent out from the land of Palestine to encourage education and to establish schools. They came to a town where there was no trace of instruction nor of any teacher. They addressed the inhabitants, and asked them to produce the guardians of the town. The heads of the municipality appeared. These are not the guardians of the city, the Rabbis exclaimed. Who are then ? asked the citizens with astonishment. The saviours of the town are the teachers (T. Jerus. Chag. I. 76 ; cf. Midrash *Tehillim*, § 127).

With such a conception of the office of teacher, the demands made upon him must, in the first

instance, have been great ; and, secondly, the respect in which he and his office were held must have been equally high. Above all things there was required of the teacher

A pure and unsullied religious life-course.

‘For the lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek instruction from his mouth : for he is a messenger of the Lord of Hosts’ (Mal. ii. 7). The demand here made by the prophet of a priest, the Talmud imposes upon the teacher. In *Moed Kat.* 17 a it is said : If the teacher resembles a messenger of the Lord, i.e. is quite blameless, then seek instruction from him, otherwise do not.

‘To him that ordereth his way will I show the salvation of the Lord’ (Ps. l. 23). That refers to the teacher who instructs children *באמונה*, i.e. in the true faith (or, conscientiously) (Mid. R. III. 9).

The teacher is to be to the youth of the school a worthy priest of religion ; but how can he be such, if he e.g. openly acts contrary to the religion which he professes ? The words of Malachi ii. 8 may alas be applied to such : ‘Ye have turned aside from the way ; have caused many to stumble in the law ; ye have destroyed the Covenant of Levi.’

The teacher should be tidy in appearance and clothing.

As the Ark of the Covenant was overlaid from within and from without with pure gold,

so the teacher should be one and the same outwardly and inwardly (Yom. 72 b).

No man is a true scholar, whose outer and inner life do not correspond (ibid.).

The scholar upon whose garment there is a stain, is guilty of death (for learning demanded greater respect), as it is said (Prov. viii. 36) 'All they that hate me', i.e. who render themselves hateful through neglect of their outward appearance 'love death', for they bring contempt upon the Law (Sab. 114 a).

It is to the discredit of a man of learning to go about in patched shoes (Berach. 43 b).

To the above-named qualifications have to be added

Moderation in food and drink.

A scholar who, on all occasions, prolongs his meal-time, will come to ruin his house, to make of his wife a widow and his children orphans, will forget all he knows, and bring upon his head no end of strife; his words will not be listened to, and he will thus profane the Name of God, his teacher, and his father, and will give a bad name to himself and to his children and children's children to the end of time (Pesach. 49 a).

The passage cited before from Malachi ii. 7 'The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge', refers to the necessity for the teacher to be well equipped with the branch of instruction which he professes.

It is a very old proverb: Rabbi has not learnt (or, taught) it, how can you expect R. Chiya to know it? That is to say, if the teacher possesses not the knowledge, how can his pupils gain it? (cf. Erubin 92 a).

No teacher should be appointed for the young, who, in addition to having the fear of Heaven within him, does not possess the necessary qualifications of learning (*Yoré Deah*, 246).

It is further demanded that the teacher should have constantly at his command the required knowledge in his subject, so as to be able to answer every question without delay.

In replying, he should not stammer; but his reply has to be fluent, immediate and decided (Kid. 30 a).

He has to give evidence of his

Love for the profession.

The teacher's calling is a high and solemn one; even God Himself identifies himself with it (Abod Zara 3 b).

No selfish motives could influence the teacher in his calling, for the disinterestedness with which he fills his position is proof of his love for it (Ned. 37 a).

The only reward reserved for him, and

which he desires, is to learn, and yet again to learn, even to teach (cf. Pirké Ab. IV. 6).

As types of such love for the profession, we might cite Rabbah, R. Assi, R. Samuel ben Silat, R. Jochanan ben Saccai, and R. Akiba (Bab. Bat. 8 a; Rosh Hash. 31 b; Pesach. 112 a).

The teacher has to be

Patient and long-suffering.

The hasty and passionate one cannot be a teacher (Pirké Ab. II. 6).

The teacher must untiringly explain a point so many times to make sure that his pupils will understand it thoroughly (Erub. 54 b).

As types of patient teachers we cite the great teacher Hillel and R. Prida (ibid.).

The teacher must be

Conscientious and faithful (cf. Pestalozzi).

He must teach with equal conscientiousness and love the children of the poor as of the rich; the same applies to reward and punishment (Taan. 24 a).

A teacher who leaves his pupils, and goes out of the room, or engages in other work in their presence, and shows himself careless in regard to instructing them, comes under the ban of Jeremiah (xlviii. 10), 'Cursed be he who doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully' Yad Hach. T. T. II. 2).

The teacher has specially to be

Modest.

Humility is the foundation upon which all the qualifications hitherto referred to rest. The teacher should, in this respect, imitate the character of Abraham, of Moses and Aaron, and of David, who possessed that virtue of humility in the highest degree (cf. Chul. 89 a).

God delivered the Law on the lowest mountain of Sinai to indicate, that the Law of God can only be gained and retained by lowness of spirit (Taan. 7 a).

The words of the Torah will only be established firmly in the mind of one who is lowly (ibid.).

The teacher must be

Bright and Cheerful.

During the teaching he must be penetrated by the spirit of God, and to this frame of mind a joyous attitude is indispensable (Erub. 54 a)

NOTE. Nevertheless the appointment was not favoured as teachers :

of *Unmarried Men* (Kid. 82 a);

of *Women* (ibid.)

[We meet with one in Chag. 4 b, מרים מגרלא, דרדקי. Cf. Sab. 104 b, and 2 *Tosephot* thereto, [אמי מרים בן סטרא ד"ה];

and of *Young teachers* (Pirké Ab. IV. 26) :—

He who learns from young teachers is like one who eats unripe grapes, and drinks wine from his vat ; but he who learns from older ones, is like one who eats ripe grapes, and drinks old wine.

Yet R. Meir's warning is as follows :—Look not at the flask, but at what is in it ; there may be a new flask, full of old wine, and there may be an old one, in which there is not even new wine (*ibid.* 27).

2. *Status.*

In accordance with the spirit of self-sacrifice and the other qualifications demanded in the teacher, was the regard paid to him and to his profession. It was of the highest character, almost saintly.

Let the reverence for thy teacher be like thy reverence for Heaven (P. Ab. IV. 15).

Thy father gives thee but the earthly life ; thy teacher eternal life (Bab. Mez. 33 a).

If some material loss threaten father and teacher, or they both labour under some great burden, or both be taken prisoner, regard to relief or ransom has first to be had for the teacher, unless in the last case the father be also a scholar (*ibid.*).

He who learns from his companion a single section, or rule, or a verse, or even a word, yea, a letter, is in duty bound to pay him honour (Pirké Ab. VI. 3).

King Jehosaphat was wont to rise from his

throne, when he espied a scholar, and call him father and teacher, embracing and kissing him (Mac. 24 a).

He who is fond of the Rabbis will have children as Rabbis; he who holds Rabbis in great esteem will have Rabbis as sons-in-law; and he who shows respect for Rabbis will himself become a learned Rabbi, or be as respected as one (Sab. 23 b).

How senseless some people are! They rise for the Scroll of the Law, but not for a great man (Mac. 22 b).

A teacher should be treated with respect, even though he be no longer able to continue his activities; for, in the words of the Sage, the broken tables of stone as well as the whole ones were conserved in one and the same Ark (Bab. Bat. 14 b).

Beware against treating with disrespect a scholar whose intellectual powers have become impaired through adverse circumstances (Menach. 99 a).

3. *Rights and Duties.*

In ancient days there was no difference of station among the Jewish people. Not as a caste did the priestly officials receive any salary for the exercise of their functions. The dues rendered to them were but compensation for their portion in the land, of which they had none when it was divided amongst the tribes, and from which the tribe of Levi, whence the

teachers of the people were originally drawn, were excluded. Hence the payment of a teacher in early days was not known ; instruction was carried out in fulfilment of a divine command—**לשמה**—for which no return was expected of one's fellow man.

See, I taught you precepts and laws, as the Lord commanded me, i.e. as I taught without reward so teach ye also without payment (Ned. 37 a).

R. Zadok said : Make not of the Torah a crown wherewith to aggrandise thyself, nor a spade wherewith to dig. So also Hillel used to say : he who makes a selfish use of the crown will pass away. Hence you may learn, that he who makes profit out of teaching the Torah endangers his very life on earth (Pirké Ab. IV. 7).

Already, however, in the second and third centuries, payment of teachers had to be resorted to : but this could only be exacted for teaching Holy Writ ; it was forbidden for instruction in Bible-exegesis, Midrash, &c. (Ned. 37 a).

When payment was made, it was but for the grammatical knowledge possessed by the instructor, or for the attention given during the instruction. Later it was said, that compensation could be made for time spent in teaching (*Yoré Deah*, 245-6). Such payment was named **שכר שימור** (Ned. 37 a). It was regarded as a special merit in the teacher if he taught the children of the poor as well as those of the rich ; of course, from the former he took no

payment (Taan. 24 a). When the school became a matter for the congregation, the voluntary support or the presenting of gifts to teachers, ceased, and the payment was made out of a general fund.

This may already be inferred from the fact that the *ריש דוכנא* was paid out of the congregational chest (Bab. Bat. 21 a).

Note.—No government regulations were required at that time to make the teacher's lot free from anxiety. It states: the community is in duty bound to support the men of learning, who devote their time to teaching, and are therefore, unable to engage in any paying concern (cf. Sab. 114 a). 'He who receives a teacher hospitably in his house and gives him of his own, the Bible reckons it unto him as though he had discharged in full his daily duty of offering "the continual offering"' (Berach. 10 b). 'The rich man who does not help the learned, will have no success in life' (Sanh. 92 a).

The appointment of a teacher is clearly emphasised as a sacred duty resting upon the community.

Teachers for children must be appointed in every town (Bab. Bat. 21 a).

The town which neglects to appoint a teacher for children should be destroyed (Sab. 119 b).

A Sage of the Talmud ordains for such a town the penalty of excommunication (ibid.).

Jerusalem was destroyed because the support of schools was stopped; and because men lost respect for scholars (ibid.).

The teacher had the special privilege that he was exempt from all public burdens, and from paying the king's taxes (Ketub. 62 a).

As regards his profession he had the right to terminate an engagement (Bab. Mez. 66 a).

If a complaint was lodged against him for undue severity in the treatment of the children under his care, he could not be dismissed, if he was otherwise proficient in his work.

Note.—According to Talmudic legislation, a teacher is no more punishable if he kill a pupil in correcting him, than a father would be in the same circumstances (Mac. 8 a).

Only if a teacher disseminates false doctrine, or if he prove himself ignorant of his subject, can he be removed from his post (Bab. Mez. 109 a-b).

III. D

THE PUPIL

1. *School age.*

WHAT the modern pedagogues and psychologists demand, that the mother should have regard even before the birth of the child for its later moral and spiritual development, is discernible in the utterances of the Rabbis long ago, when in figurative language they remark :

A woman who eats lemons regularly, will have children of pleasant odour (Ket. 61 a; *vide* from 60 b).

That is to say, a woman who, during pregnancy, in the pre-natal days, finds pleasure in pleasant things, thereby implants in the child to be born of her the seeds of pleasantness.

The arresting passage in the *Midrash Tanchuma* (to *Pekudé*), which corresponds to the Talmudic statement in Nid. 30 b, quoted above, p. 38, might appropriately be given here at fuller length :

While the child is still in its mother's womb . . . it eats of that which the mother eats, and drinks of that which the mother drinks. . . . A light illumines round about its head, whereby it looks and sees from one end of the world to

the other During this interval, too, it gains an insight into all the knowledge that is available, all the rules of life whereby, if a man observe them, he will live,—the veritable secrets of Almighty Wisdom. Once, however, arrived in the world of phenomena, an angel comes forward, and closes its mouth ; the knowledge it has acquired is all but forgotten . . . Yet, on the strength of these dim recollections, the new-born is adjured thus : ‘Be thou righteous, be not wicked ! . . . Understand that the Almighty is pure, His messengers are pure ; and the soul which He has placed within thee is pure. If thou preservest thy soul in purity, well and good ; but if not, I will take it from thee.’

As soon as the child begins to talk, a beginning should be made with teaching it (Succ. 42 a). The father shall teach it to repeat after him the words of Scripture : ‘The Torah which Moses commanded us is an inheritance of Jacob’ ; also the confession of the Unity of God : ‘Hear, O Israel, the Eternal Being is our God, the Eternal Being is One.’

As regards its physical fitness, the beginning of school duties presupposes in the child a certain firmness of the bodily organs, and this is generally placed in the sixth year of a child’s age.

He who sends his child to school before its sixth year, runs after it, and does not catch it, i. e., says Rashi, he desires to strengthen it and

is not able to do so, as the child, on account of its extreme weakness, runs the risk of dying (Ket. 50 a).

Even at six, the teacher should bear in mind that the organs are still very weak.

The Wise man of Usha ordained, that till its twelfth year consideration should be shown in the matter of a child's instruction (ibid.).

It was prescribed by Joshua ben Gamla, that children should be sent to school according to their physical ability when six or seven years old, which shows that he already distinguished between, on the one hand, the ability to enter school and, on the other hand, the duty to attend. Rab protested against beginning at too early an age, and said to R. Samuel ben Silat (who was a teacher of children): 'Receive no child under six years old' (Ket. 50 a).

Note.—Abravanel considers that a child should learn the letters in his fourth year, symbolised by the ordinance regarding the 'Orlah', according to which the fruits were not to be tasted in the first three years, as this was reserved for the fourth year.

2. *School Hours.*

School has to begin and end punctually.

Fix a time for teaching, i. e. give the pupil a certain time for coming and going (Erub. 54 b).

We cannot determine which were the hours fixed. As a rule, the hours were morning and

evening, thus to stimulate pupils to devote themselves to 'study by day and by night'.

In the hot season, between 17th of Tammuz and the 9th of Ab, the hours were reduced; and, according to some Rabbis, bodily punishment was prohibited during this period (cf. Yalkut Shimoni, § 945, and *ibid.* Psalms xci). Perhaps this arose, too, from the fact that these days, being days of sorrow for the destruction of Jerusalem, put the pious teachers in rather a bad mood, and the pupils themselves, owing to meat restrictions, were not too strong physically.

According to Maimonides (*Yad Hach. T. T.* II. 2). the school hours were uninterrupted; the instruction was continuous, the whole day and a part of the evening. The only holidays (and then only partially in some cases) were the eve and rest-days of the Sabbaths and the Festivals, and later on, the Fast-days, the three days before Shebuoth, half-days on New Moon, and Hanucah, Lag Baomer, the 15th of Ab, and the 15th of Shevat.

It also became the custom in time to bring the little children to the synagogue or school on the Festival of Revelation, to teach them the alphabet as well as a few maxims. No fresh work was begun with pupils on Sabbaths, only that was repeated which had been taught before (Ned. 37 a).

Any arbitrary interruption of school teaching was sternly forbidden. According to the dictum incorporated in our Daily Prayer Book 'The study of the Law is equal to all else' (Peah II), there was

absolutely no reason for breaking off its pursuit. Let the following suffice to prove it:—

He who is engaged in the study of the Law is not bound to bring the sacrifice on the altar : the study of the Law is as meritorious as the bringing of the offering (Menach. 110).

Not even to re-erect the Temple dare instruction be disturbed (Sab. 119 b).

3. *School Discipline.*

[Higher than good doctrine is good discipline.—
Diesterweg, &c.]

The Sages of the Talmud had well-defined views on discipline in the school ; for the rules laid down by them on this head are, with the exception of trifling variations, the same as those cited in all modern manuals of pedagogics.

That these details of their ideas on education were still in vogue in the Middle Ages is evidenced by the clear and concise digest by Maimonides contained in his *Hilchoth Talmud Torah*.

The regulations demanded :

(a) Regularity in school attendance (as we have already remarked in the previous section), and no undue holidays ;

(b) Order in class ;

The very designation ר"ש דיוכנא 'first of the form'—monitor or captain, is evidence of a fixed order existing in school (Bab. Bat. 21 a).

(c) No pupil dare alter the set lesson, and attend to other matters, without permission of the superintending teacher (Sab. 13 a);

(d) No pupil shall put a question to his teacher immediately on his entering the room, but he must wait till pupils and teachers have settled down (Yad Hach. T. T. IV. 6);

(e) Two pupils dare not put a question at one and the same time (ibid.);

(f) No pupil has a right to put a question on a subject not on the time-table; for apart from its being out of order, the teacher may not be prepared for the question, and might lose in respect with the pupils, in case he were unable to give correct information (Sab. 3 b);

(g) The pupil should put the question to his teacher decorously and address him respectfully, and not ask too many questions at one time (Yad Hach. T. T. IV. 7);

(h) The pupil should not go to sleep at school; he who acts contrariwise will forget what he has learnt (Sanhed. 71 a);

(i) He should not talk at school, or otherwise detract from its sacred character, which is even more so than the Synagogue (Yad Hach. T. T. IV. 9);

(j) He should not wish the one who sneezes: 'For health!' for the objects of the House of Learning are thereby interrupted (Berach. 53a).

Note.—In T. Sanhedrin 71 a, the discussion centres round the episode of the rebellious son condemned to death. Immediately thereon R. Zeira propounds the statement cited above as to sleeping at school, in order to symbolise that the disrespect which pupils show during the hours of instruction at school is a fairly sure sign of their rebellion later on.

4. *Punishments and Awards.*

[Train by kindness (Luther); no compulsion (Ratichius, Comenius); no corporal punishment (Locke); the child not to be made to feel it is being corrected (Rousseau).

The demand made by certain quasi philanthropists to do away with punishment altogether, or where it is at all possible, is scarcely a kindness, for it is not in the interests of the child's welfare; it is rather selfishness, which only seeks to avoid a duty, undoubtedly unpleasant for the time being. Nevertheless, this attitude has had the wholesome effect of bringing about a more rational view concerning the application of punishment in the educational system. It has been bound to acknowledge the necessity for some degree of school punishment, inasmuch as the child will learn thereby to subject its will to that of others, and to reconcile itself to the demands of reason, while its moral outlook must grow in consequence of these experiences.

This modern view is exactly the opinion of the Sages of the Talmud; but it took more than a thousand years to set down as the only true views such pedagogic rules with regard to school punish-

ment, and as we shall see further on with regard to awards.

If we would sum up briefly the character of the methods employed during the periods in which the school developed, we would say that the child was corrected, and the growing youth exhorted and chastised. This is both according to the Talmud and modern manuals on school discipline.

According to the Talmud, too, no one should be coerced into study by fear or punishment. Only such pupils are to be punished who have the capacity to learn, but are lazy; while pupils who are weak and cannot learn, are not to be punished (Succ. 21).

Throw gall among the pupils, i. e. inspire them with reverence, pretending to be strict with them without allowing them to feel any harshness (Ket. 103 b).

Moreover, the teacher should endeavour to win the hearts of his pupils, without however losing their respect for him.

Be it ever your way to thrust off with the left, and draw to you with the right hand; and do not as the prophet Elisha, who (2 Kings v. 25) thrust his servant Gehazi away with both hands, (through which the latter became a rebel and led the people astray), and do not as Joshua ben Perachyah who thrust aside the Nazarene with both hands (Sot. 47 a).

A disobedient child is mentioned among

those who, though thrust off by the left hand, should nevertheless be brought back to the right path by holding out to it the right hand (*ibid.*).

Even a child's dignity should be considered by the teacher.

The honour of thy pupil should be as dear to thee as thy own (*Pirké Ab. IV. 12.*).

To the child who makes no progress, patience must be shown: it should be placed, for example, next to an industrious one, so that it be encouraged by its companion to persevere in its lessons (*vide להם משנה* to *Hilch. T. T. II. 2.*).

The Wise Men of Usha directed in the case of little children, that they should first be treated mildly, but later on from their twelfth year they should be proceeded against with severer measures, with corporal punishment or by depriving them of food (*Ket. 50 a.*).

But the teacher shall not whip the pupil, or beat him with a stick, only with a small strap (*Maim. Hilch. T. T. II. 2.*).

Note.—Occasionally such humane directions must have been transgressed by the Jewish teachers; for we read of Samuel, the astronomer and physician, that he was once beaten by his teacher so violently that he came home crying. The enraged father thereupon exclaimed: Not enough that the teacher is incompetent, he is very free with beatings (*Chul. 107 b.*).

It was regarded as contrary to law to inflict corporal punishment upon grown-up children or

students ; such conduct was punishable with excommunication, as is stated (Moed Katan 17 a) :—

If anyone beats his grown-up son, the anathema shall be hurled at him, for he has sinned against the command, 'Thou shalt not put a stumbling-block in the way of the blind': this is explained by *Rashi* to signify, that the son might thereby have been misled to rise up against his father (the same would presumably apply to the teacher), and have incurred a grievous penalty.

That the teachers of the Talmud, who loathed to take remuneration for their teaching services, kept strictly to the principle of equality and impartiality, need simply be stated.

In the matter of education, all children, rich and poor, should be treated alike (Taan. 24 a).

Be cautious regarding the children of the poor, for it is from them that the Law (learning) doth proceed (Ned. 81 a). [Cf. Pestalozzi.]

As punishment is the recompense for wrong-doing, so reward should symbolise right-doing. But such awards should be chosen that do not stimulate the baser instincts, such as greed for money.

A teacher of youth, whose prayer for rain was there and then responded to, when questioned by Rab, gives as one of his merits the fact that he always had by him little 'fish tanks' (some interpret the expression 'cells of honey'), which he distributed among his un-

willing pupils, whom he coaxed, in order that they might improve, and attend school regularly (Taan. 24 a).

5. *Difference in capacity and the acquisition of knowledge.*

Try to understand the disposition and special characteristics of the child (Locke, Rousseau); study the child's individuality (Diesterweg).

The proper estimation of variety in the mental faculties and capacities of the pupil affords a further proof of the experience of the Talmudists in the department of pedagogics.

With reference to grasping the matter taught, compare Pirké Aboth V. 15, 18.

There are four qualities in disciples; he who is quick in perceiving and quick in losing, his gain goes in his loss; he who is slow in perceiving and forgets slowly, his loss is made up by his gain; he who perceives quickly and loses slowly, his is a goodly portion; he who is hard in perceiving and forgets easily, his is an evil portion (Pirké Ab. V. 15).

Many a one resembles a sponge, which sucks in all, and retains all. The pupil will grasp the instruction, whether it be on Bible-text, Mishna or Midrash, on practical rules or Agadic sayings. The second class consists of such who, like a sieve, let out the bran, and retain the fine flour. They are such as let the bad go, and gather what is good. Then

there is the stupid pupil who resembles a funnel, which takes in all and lets out all. In his case what he hears goes in at one ear and comes out at the other. Lastly there is the vicious pupil to be compared to a strainer, which lets the wine pass out, and retains the lees. So, too, many a pupil, lets the best part of instruction go, and retains that which is worse than useless, perhaps mischievous.

(Ab. de R. N. XL; cf. P. Ab. V. 18).

Similar to the habit of R. Jochanan ben Zaccai (*vide* Pirké Ab. II. 10–11), a certain Talmudic Sage, as narrated in *Treatise*, Gittin 67 a, was wont to enumerate the distinguishing characteristics of various students of the Law in the following manner:—

Rabbi Meir is a scholar and scribe; R. Yehuda could be discreet when he wished to be; R. Tarphon is like a heap of nuts (meaning, that in replying to the question of a disciple, he was able to adduce evidence for his views from Scripture, Midrash, Mishna, Halacha, and Agada—all was heaped together in his brain); R. Ishmael was a well-stocked store, in which everything was ready to hand; R. Akiba was a treasure-house with departments well arranged and defined (i.e. he was logical in his learning); R. Jochanan ben Nuri resembles a traveller's box of samples (i.e. whatever was asked for could be supplied); and R. Eleazar b. Azariah

is like a spice-box of fragrant odours. The learning of R. Eliezer b. Jacob was, if not wide, yet eclectic; and as for R. José, his remarks were always accompanied by explanations; R. Simeon grinds away vigorously, and what he forgets is not worth retaining; it is but the bran of the fine flour of learning which is lost.

The capacities of children being different, the clever child should not be made to feel proud, nor the backward ones choked off from the attempt to gain knowledge.

If thou hast learnt much Torah, do not boast of any merit in thee, since for that purpose thou wast created (P. Aboth, II. 9; *vide* from § 17 to end).

Elijah, the prophet, was once on the way, and met a man who scoffed at him. He turned round, and addressed him thus: What will you answer on the Judgment-Day for not having learnt the Torah? He rejoined, I should have had given to me the knowledge, the sense, and the heart. What is your occupation? Elijah enquired. I catch birds and fish. Ha! you have sense enough to take flax, and spin and weave it, and to make nets wherewith to catch birds and fish, and then to sell them, and why should you not have sense enough to study the Law? (Mid. Tanch. V, portion ךל״).

The necessary qualifications for students to acquire knowledge are as follows :—

(a) *Industry.*

Prepare thyself for the study of the Torah, for the knowledge of it does not come to thee by inheritance (P. Ab. II. 17).

If anyone tells you, I have laboured and found naught, do not believe him ; I have gained knowledge without labour, do not believe him ; I have laboured and found knowledge, him you may believe (Meg. 6 b).

(b) *Self-denial.*

This is the way to gain knowledge of the Law : to eat bread and salt, to drink even water according to measure, to sleep on the ground, to lead a trying life, and yet to continue toiling in the study of the Law (P. Ab. VI. 4).

(c) *Good conduct.*

Keep away from that which is ignoble (ugly) and from that which resembles it (Chul. 44 b).

Elisha ben Abuyah would say :—When one is occupied in good deeds, and is very studious in the Law, he may be compared to one who, in building, first places the bricks in position and then adds the mortar ; for although many waters may come beside the structure, it will not be moved (Ab. de R. N. 24).

Furthermore : he who learns in youth-time, will find that the words of the Law are assimilated in his blood (ibid.).

Woe to him who occupies himself with the Law, and is without the fear of Heaven ! (Ab. de R. N. II).

He in whom the fear of sin comes before its knowledge, his knowledge will endure ; but he in whom his knowledge comes before the fear of sin, his knowledge will not endure (P. Ab. III. 11).

(d) *Modesty, not false shame.*

As water flows from the height downwards, so does the Torah flow only to such as are of modest disposition (Taan. 7 a) ;

Nevertheless, while a student should be modest, it is but too patent that the bashful one will not increase his knowledge (P. Ab. II. 6).

Note.—Before and after the lessons the children should pray, in order to awaken and strengthen their religious and moral sense.

[‘Begin with prayer’ (Ratichius).]

R. Nehemiah ben Hakana used to offer up a short prayer on entering the House of Study and on leaving it (Berach. 28 b).

What religious communion can be said to set a higher store upon the acquisition of knowledge, and the blessedness which it confers upon its votaries than that which from the earliest times of the Rabbis, finds its students, on the conclusion of the study of every Treatise of the Talmud, uttering the following prayer, full of sublime

thought and deep pathos, as prescribed in the days of old, and printed at the end of each and every such Treatise ?

May it be thy will, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, that thy Law may be our active pursuit in this world, and be with us in the world to come. May the words of thy Law be sweet to our mouth and to the mouth of thy people, the House of Israel, and may we all, we and our offspring, and the offspring of thy people, the House of Israel, be God-fearing, and ready to learn thy Law. 'O that thy commandment might make me wiser than mine enemies, for it is ever with me!' 'Let my heart be perfect in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed.' 'I will never forget thy precepts, for with them Thou hast quickened me.' 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord; teach me thy statutes.' Amen, Amen, Amen. Selah, for evermore.

I acknowledge with thankfulness, O Lord, my God, and God of my fathers, that Thou hast set my lot among those who dwell in the House of Learning, and hast not made my lot to be of those who sit at the street-corners. I rise up early at morn, and so do they; but while I rise up for the purpose of studying the Law, they are up early to pursue vain purposes. I labour, and they labour; yet while I labour and gain a true reward, they labour to obtain no lasting reward. I hasten, and they hasten; but they rush headlong on to the pit of destruction, while I hasten forward to the life of the world to come. . . .

May it be thy will, O my Lord God, that as Thou hast helped me to finish the study of this Treatise, so Thou wilt aid me to start other Treatises and Works, and to complete their study; so that I may learn and teach, observe, do and fulfil in love all the words of instruction conveyed in thy Holy Law! May, too, the merit of all the Tanaim, Amoraim, and Rabbinic scholars generally be at my side, and help my offspring, so that the Law

shall never depart from my mouth, nor from that of my children and children's children! May the aspiration be fulfilled in me: 'When thou walkest, thy Law shall lead thee; when thou liest down, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall commune with thee!' 'For by me shall thy days be increased, and years of life shall be added unto thee.' 'Length of days' is in her right hand, and in her left riches and honour may be found.' 'The Lord will give his people strength: may the Lord bless his people with peace!'

IV

FEMALE EDUCATION

OPINION was divided among the Jews on this subject, namely, as to whether the woman should receive, as the man, a theoretical higher education (Sot. 20 a).

Generally speaking, it was not recommended that women be introduced to the abstruse study of the Law, so-called Talmudic learning; although, even in this respect, we meet with exceptions, as, according to tradition, in the case of the daughters of Zelophehad (Bab. Bat. 119 a), not omitting the high-souled Beruriah, wife of R. Meir.

Against the advisability of female education it was contended, that woman is by nature so constituted, that she is prone to treat learning either in a superficial manner, or to go to exaggerated lengths. Maimonides adds, that the objection raised was as regards the teaching of the 'Oral Law', but not the 'Written Law' (Yad Hach. T. T. I. 13).

However, most of the ungallant utterances concerning women came from celibates such as Ben Azai, and to say the least of it, it is unwise to construct a theory out of the unkind or bitter sayings of men that knew not the blessedness of matrimonial life.

This circumstance, however, did not stand in the way of women cultivating the arts and sciences in due measure, as also the Greek language and philosophy (cf. Bab. Kam. 82 b), the study of which was forbidden on political grounds to the men; the language itself was allowed to be learnt by the Jewish girl as it served her as an additional adornment (*vide* Menach. 89 b; and end of Sotah, &c.).

The Talmud would have the girls reared to become loving housewives, not scholars. It considered that in the domain in which feeling predominates, woman may best be seen to perfection, and in her most captivating capacity.

When, however, the mind is trained at the expense of feeling, woman loses her simple womanly and unsophisticated way; she assumes the masculine habit, and becomes thereby alienated from her natural mission.

‘To be man’s tender mate was woman born—and in obeying Nature she best serves the purposes of Heaven.’

‘Her office to rear, to teach,
Becoming, as is meet and fit,
A link among the days to knit
The generations each with each.’

This was the Rabbinic conception of woman’s mission. It is reflected in the dictum of Rousseau, that ‘Our earliest teacher is the mother’; and our own *Hagadah* ritual for the ‘Seder’ night of Passover reminds us annually of the truth when the Jew rehearses the words, ‘As for him who knows

not how to ask', i. e. the child, *אֵת פֶּתַח לִי*; 'Be it thy task, O woman, to open the subject!'

'Mother! it is thy duty to anticipate the child's enquiry.' It is the mother that awakens the dawning consciousness of her child. Her sphere is the home, in which she works as the wife and mother, with richest blessings.

That she fulfilled these duties we learn from many pages in the Talmud, which go to prove that the 'Valiant Woman' of Proverbs was no myth, but flourished in reality in Talmudic times, and survived in later times. (*See my 'Valiant Woman', an Address to our Girls, 1898*).

R. Yehuda, never spoke of his wife as his 'wife', but as his 'house', implying that it was she who upheld the house (*Yoma 2 a*).

R. Akiba, speaking of his wife to his pupils, remarked: 'All that I am, and all that you are, is owing to her' (*Ned. 50 a*).

R. Helbo would say: Let a man see to it that he pay the proper respect to his wife, for it is through her that a blessing will rest upon the house (*Bab. Mez. 59 a*).

R. José once met the prophet Elijah, and asked him in which way the wife could be the help-mate of the husband. Elijah replied:—When the man brings home wheat and flax, can he himself prepare the wheat for his meal, and make clothes from the flax? Is it not the wife who, in doing this, proves to be light to his eyes, and puts him upon his feet? (*Yeb. 63 a*).

Much greater is the portion of God's promises reserved for the wife than that which is in store for the husband. And for what is all this great merit? She it is who compels the children to their studies; she it is who rouses her husband to repair to the lecture-halls, and awaits his return thence; and all the while she attends to her household duties (Berach. 17 a).

In whom can you expect to find the cream of religious knowledge? In him who has imbibed it with his mother's milk (ibid.).

R. Ishmael was one of the greatest Doctors of the Law. One day his mother charged him before the Rabbis, and said: Please rebuke my son for not paying me that respect which, as a child, he should do. The Rabbis were amazed at this request, and thought to themselves, Can it be possible that R. Ishmael should be guilty of such a sin? and they asked her what he did. When he, she rejoined, returns home from his place of study, I wish to wash his feet with my own hands . . . but he declines. Thereupon the Rabbis addressed him and said: Let her have her will: it is for a mother to determine what is implied in the command 'Honour thy father and thy mother' (Talmud Jerus. Kid. 61 b; cf. Tosaphot, Talmud Bab. Kid. 31 b).

The mother of Rabbi Tarphon was about to cross the courtyard on a Sabbath in search of

something she had lost. R. Tarphon went and placed his two hands under the soles of her feet, so that she should walk on his hands, and not soil her feet, in the endeavour to reach her bed-chamber. Once he was ill, and the Sages went to visit him. Thereupon his mother said to them: Pray for my son Tarphon, for he pays me unbounded respect. They asked her, What does he do? And she told them of the incident. Whereupon they replied: Even if he did so ten thousand times, he could not pay you one half of the respect due to a mother (*ibid.*; cf. variant in text of T. B.).

A Sage, named R. Joseph, was in the habit of rising whenever he heard the footsteps of his mother, and he would exclaim: I rise to greet the majesty of Heaven, which is now approaching (Kid. 31 b).

V

SCHOOL AND LIFE

[Cf. Rousseau, Herbart, Diesterweg.]

IN Judaism religious progress, implied in study and learning, is an unceasing duty, and does not stop with age or under varying conditions. Every Israelite is bound to study the Law, be he rich or poor, well or ill, young or old, prince or beggar.

The study of the Torah (i. e. learning in general) was intended by Heaven to be man's travelling companion through life, and to be cultivated under all conditions of prosperity and adversity (cf. Erub. 54 a).

It was a panacea against all spiritual and physical sufferings. See how the ways of God differ from those of man! When among men Doctors prescribe a drug, it will be a cure for one, but act as poison to another. Not so God's Law (it brings relief to all) (ibid.).

As for the students of the Law, they are regarded by Heaven as though they had brought the offering and incense in His Name; in truth, as though, in the time of study, they had taken part in Divine Service and in the restoration of the Temple ;

Furthermore, he who is engaged in the study of the Torah requires neither burnt-offering, nor sin-offering, neither meat-offering, nor guilt-offering (cf. Menach. 110).

But we should ever bear in mind that with the Rabbis theoretical instruction was but the basis of practical life ; to them learning was not the main thing, but the carrying into practice what was learnt (Pirké Ab. I. 17).

He who has but learned the theory, without going more deeply into the subject and studied its practical applications, is an 'Am-haarets' (ignoramus), nay worse, he is a boor, more like a heathen (Sot. 22 a ; Berach. 47 b).

This practical application of one's study and learning was acquired, or rather strengthened, by intercourse with men of wisdom and one's companions.

Obtain for thyself a teacher, and gain an associate (P. Ab. I. 6).

One may gather much instruction from the ordinary conversation of scholars (Succ. 21 b).

The Rabbis considered as part of their training for the practical in life the adoption of some handiwork. It was an axiom in religion, that learning should be combined with some craft.

True to this axiom each one chose for himself, and for his son, some art or industry, which in his

view was sufficient to provide for himself and his family the necessities of life.

None of them, however, plied the task of a merchant; on the whole, they seem to have had an aversion against commerce. Agriculture was highly prized. 'In the future all trades and occupations shall vanish from off the face of the earth, agriculture alone shall remain' (Yebam. 63 a). Building was looked upon as a poor concern, likely to impoverish one. As regards traffic in money, it was only the greed of the Middle Ages and more modern times—the false policy of kings and governments—that forced the Jews to this mode of making a living. And, in the irony of fate, it stood them in good stead; for it was often the only way in which they could purchase and preserve their lives.

In accordance with the dictum of the Jewish Sage, 'There is a blessing to be found in things not bought with money' (*Rashi* on Yeb. 63 a), monetary transactions and speculation were looked upon with disfavour, and the Talmud would have none of it.

It is undoubtedly, however, with a thrill of pride, when looking back to the times of the mighty religious influence exerted by the great Jewish Academies of old, that we can point to the significant fact that these exemplary religious teachers did not disdain to earn their livelihood as water-carriers, hewers of wood, blacksmiths, tailors, &c. This was the daily work of men like Hillel and R. Akiba (wood-chopper), R. Isaac (smith), R. Nehemiah

(cooper), R. Yehuda (tailor) and R. Jochanan (shoe-maker).

(For fuller information on this theme, see *Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review*, July 1891, on 'The Dignity of Labour in the Talmud.)

Such Rabbis gave practical illustration of the theories which they themselves pronounced:—

He who gains a livelihood by his own labour is greater than he who is simply God-fearing (Berach. 8 a).

Man is born to work ; he was created to toil (Ned. 49 b ; cf. Sanhed. 99 b).

How beautiful is religious knowledge (Talmud Tora h) associated with worldly pursuits (Derech Erets)! together they deliver from sin. Religious knowledge without work is lost, and leads to evil (cf. P. Ab. II. 2).

A man should teach his son some handicraft, clean and light (Kid. 82 a).

Not to teach a child some craft is to train him to be a highwayman (ibid. 29 a).

Though scarcity might reign for seven years, it never knocked at the door of the artisan (Sanhed. 29 a).

Work is a great thing ; it honours the worker (Ned. 49 b).

How life's experience has proved over and over again the truth of the epigram '*Melacha Melucha*'—Upon work there is stamped the hall-mark of a dignity that is royal !

(Commentary on Aboth, *vide* Kochbé Jizchak XXIX.)

The man who does not love work, but shuns it, excludes himself from the covenant of Heaven; for just as the Holy Law is a sign of the Covenant, so does Work constitute a sign of the Covenant between God and man (Ab. d. R. N. XI).

Nevertheless, in spite of what has just been said with regard to the dignity and sanctity of work, Rabbi Nehoröi is credited with the following expression of opinion:—

I leave alone all the crafts—all the manual occupations—in the world, and teach my son Torah only; for all crafts and trades stand a man in good stead merely in his youth, in the days of his strength; but if he should light upon sickness or danger, or have his measure of trials, and he can do no work, he might die in the time of famine. How different is the case of the study of God's Law! It brings a man honour, and guards him in his youth, while it supplies him with prospects and hope in old age. Referring to his youth-time, Holy Writ states: 'They that hope in the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not be faint.' As regards man's old age, it is said: 'They shall still shoot forth in old age; they shall be full of sap and green' (Talmud Jerus. Kid. IV. 12).

This is, indeed, the comforting assurance—the culminating condition attained in the schooling of the life of ‘the righteous’; he, in the Psalmist’s words (xcii. 13, 14), ‘shall spring up like a palm-tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Planted in the house of the Lord, they shall blossom in the courts of our God’.

